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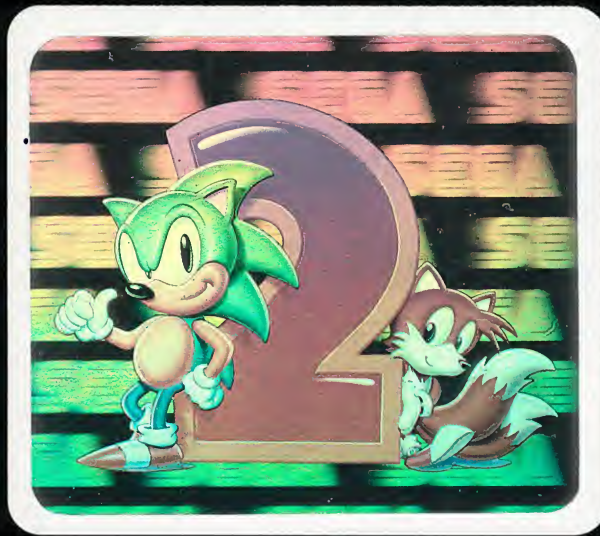
COLLECTOR'S EDITION

FDC 50080

# Video Games & Computer Entertainment®

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October 1992



## Sonic's Back for a New Genesis Adventure— And He's Brought a Friend

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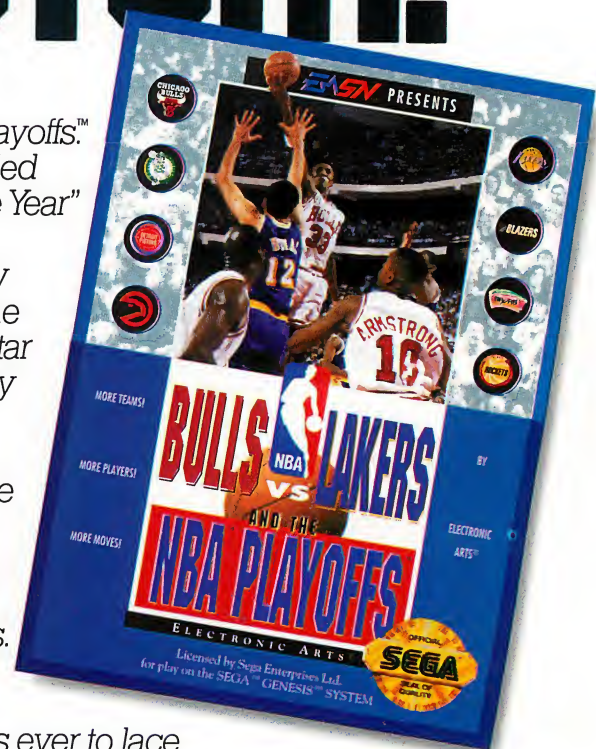
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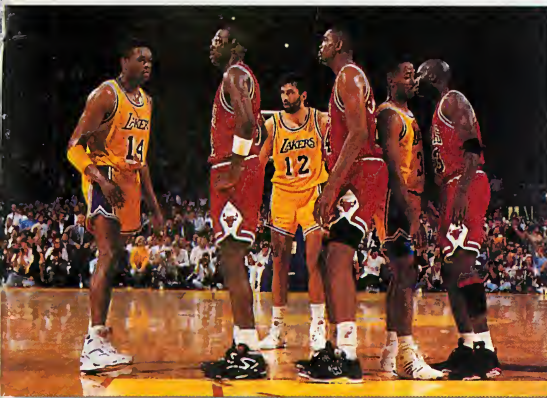


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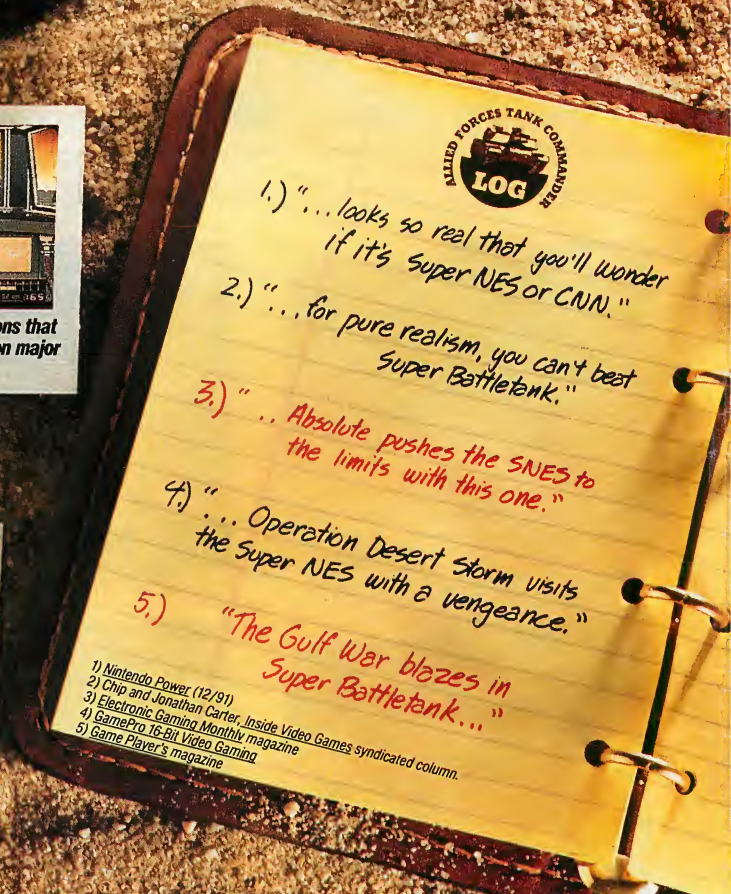
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**CIRCLE #102 ON READER SERVICE CARD.**

Cover: VG&CE and Sega bring you a first in electronic-gaming journalism, a preview and special collector's hologram of *Sonic 2*. Turn to page 36 for an exclusive preview of *Sonic 2* that VG&CE's Executive Editor Andy Eddy was invited to Sega for.

Cover hologram: Light Impressions, Inc. of Santa Cruz, California.



VOLUME IV, ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 1992



FEATURES



REVIEWS & PREVIEWS



80

**SEARCHING FOR THE DARK WORLD: A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO ZELDA III, PART II**

by Clayton Walnum

*This month we discover new secrets as well as visit the Tower of Hera, the Dark World, the Lost Woods and Hyrule Castle.*



94

**PARAGON'S PROGRESS: A LOOK AT MICROPROSE GREENSBURG**

by David S. Moskowitz

*Recently, David visited the new MPS Greensburg division for an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at some exciting software soon to come.*

36

**AN AMUSEMENT PARK CALLED SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2**

by Andy Eddy

*Join Andy as he takes an official sneak-peek tour of Sonic 2 for the Genesis and Game Gear. Also, preview two hot new Genesis games for the near future.*



44

**SEGA CD SPECIAL PREVIEW**

by Mike Davila

*The much anticipated Sega CD is finally on its way. Take a look at the hardware behind the machine and preview the U.S. and Japanese software lineups.*

50

**VIDEO-GAME REVIEWS**

Soulblazer, Shapeshifter, Team USA Basketball, Super Bowling, Goal! Two, D&D: Warriors of the Eternal Sun, Order of the Griffon, World Heroes, Clue, Spider-Man: Return of the Sinister Six, New Adventure Island, Super High Impact, TMNT IV: Turtles in Time, Gargoyle's Quest II, Jennifer Capriati Tennis, Dead Moon and The Duel: Test Drive II.

74

**GAMING ON THE GO**

by Chris Bieniek

*Batman Returns, WordZap, Shadow of the Beast, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, Star Wars and Pinball Jam.*



98

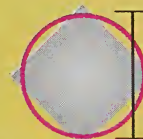
**COMPUTER-GAME PREVIEWS**

*Car and Driver, Liberty or Death, Spelljammer, Dark Sun and El Fish.*

102

**COMPUTER-GAME REVIEWS**

*Dune, SimLife, Rampart, Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis, Guy Spy and the Crystals of Armageddon, Dagger of Amon Ra, Pacific Islands, Spellcraft: Aspects of Valor, Pit-Fighter and Prophecy of the Shadow.*



DEPARTMENTS

**EDITOR'S LETTER 6**

**READER MAIL 10**

**TIP SHEET 16**

**NEWS BITS 22**

**EASTER EGG HUNT 30**

**INSIDE GAMING 90**

**ADVERTISER INDEX 106**

**COMPUTER STRATEGIES 114**

**Q & A 118**

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L E T T E R



## EDITOR

As far as we know, this is a first in American electronic-gaming magazines: a collector's edition hologram on the cover. Thanks go to the hologram-creation talents of Light Impressions (of Santa Cruz, California) for helping us put it together. As well, we'd like to thank Sega for its assistance and cooperation.

Which leads us to why the hologram is there in the first place: We'd like to be the first to show you what excitement you face with the upcoming release of *Sonic 2* on the Genesis, as well as a sneak peek at other *Sonic* sequels on

Sega's various game machines. We think you'll agree that they maintain the spirit of the original *Sonic*. But that's certainly not all. This issue also features what you can expect to see when the Sega CD Multimedia Entertainment System is released later this year. There are many details left to be determined, but we're offering a good primer of what you'll be seeing on store shelves in short order.

We also bring you a behind-the-scenes look at the game developments that MPS Greensburg (formerly Paragon) is undertaking on the computer-game side. Add to that our full slate of reviews, tips and tricks, news and previews, and you have a very solid issue, right?

Of course, that's hot enough, but we don't want to cut short how VG&CE extends beyond the printed

page to give you info on what's taking place in the realm of electronic games. For example, we are available on a variety of on-line services, where you can send us messages or Easter eggs, ask questions and more. Turn to page 12 to see how you can get in contact with us using your computer and modem.

Our main source of electronic messaging, however, is on the Delphi Information Service. Our



"World of Video Games SIG" (special interest group) features a forum and real-time conference area where you can leave messages and have a conversation with our editors

and writers. The database houses computer files, including a recent addition called Game Bytes. It's a free (other than the cost of downloading) electronic "magazine" with reviews of new computer and video games; in some cases, the editors have included screen shots. Our database also has a section for preview screens of not-yet-released games, which you can download and view on your computer.

This is how VG&CE goes the extra mile for you. Stick with us, and we'll keep you informed. Thanks for reading VG&CE.

(To sign up for a Delphi account, call (800) 365-4636 from your computer, then enter the password IP33. Follow the prompts for more information.)

—Andy Eddy, Executive Editor

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**FEEL THE DANGER!**



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*How do I get higher scores?*

**ANSWER:**  
***Turbo Touch 360™***

**QUESTION:**  
*How do I eliminate thumb fatigue  
and blisters?*

**ANSWER:**  
***Turbo Touch 360™***

**QUESTION:**  
*How do I get better diagonal and  
circular control?*

**ANSWER:**  
***Turbo Touch 360™***

**QUESTION:**  
*How do I get more "into the game"?*

**ANSWER:**  
***Turbo Touch 360™***

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**ANSWER:**  
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CIRCLE #104 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



## A CLASSIC REQUEST

After reading your July '92 issue I just had to write and comment on two different references to a common problem in the video-gaming world. The first reference to the problem came in Andy Eddy's opening editorial, and the second in the Game Doctor's reply to a letter complaining about the Game Genie. That problem is the lack of truly enjoyable games to play on today's systems.

Andy Eddy's editorial hit the problem on the head when he pointed out that if the games aren't fun, even the best system specs won't make them any better. He sees simplicity and durable game play as the defining features of a great game, not how good the graphics and sound are. The last time I checked, the great board games that have endured over time had rather poor graphics—you know those plastic things don't really look like hotels in Monopoly—and no sound at all. The same is true of many of the best video games. They were simply fun to play and easy to grasp.

Why aren't the games that much fun to play anymore? The Game Doctor had it pegged. Too many games today require you to "conquer" them. Once that is done, the game loses its appeal. Classic games like *Missile Command*, *Asteroids* and *Tetris* cannot be conquered. You can get good at them, but the end is always that you lose your last man and the game beckons you to see if you can reach just one more, more difficult level of play. The "conquerable" games also all too often take the shape of a horizontally scrolling, run-and-jump contest. It almost makes you wish *Pitfall* had never been written, the

way companies keep coming out with these "me-too" rehashes of what is becoming an extremely tired play mechanic. How about a little more originality and variety?

Once again, game manufacturers: Graphics and sound do not a game make. They may enhance a game's overall appeal, but they are no substitute for good, solid fun.

Thanks for the opportunity to get on my soapbox.

—W. Jayson Hill  
Knoxville, Tennessee

*Right you are, sir. There appear to be a lot more followers in the industry these days than there are leaders, but it's sad, because that's what will cause people to turn away from the electronic games. When consumers get burned too often—especially when game prices reach closer to \$100, or more when you consider the cost of Neo•Geo games—it's not hard to believe that they will go elsewhere for their entertainment.*

*While we don't wish that Pitfall wasn't introduced, we certainly would like some more creativity in game design. Me-too-ism runs rampant. However, even a game like Tetris can get a face-lift and be fun again. Just look at the recently released Super Tetris for computers. It features, for the most part, the same play mechanic as the original Tetris, yet it adds some new nuances: bombs that appear as dropping pieces when you complete lines; treasures that provide strate-*

*gic benefit when they are bombed; a limit to the number of pieces you can have in a round; various configurations, including head-to-head play by modem or network; and more. This takes a game that some people were saturated by and moves it in a different direction.*

*A very loud bell should be sounding in some people's heads—and it's the sound of 1983 clanging in from the past. It's also a wake-up call to signal to people that there's no security in the electronic-game industry, and not to rest on your laurels. If changes aren't made to bring more innovation to the consumer, their company may just dry up and blow away. It's happened before, and it certainly can happen again.*

## WRESTLING WITH A DECISION

I don't usually buy "gamezines" or write letters to many companies, but I am having a problem. I owned an NES, but sold it and bought a Genesis, which I like better. Unfortunately, the Genesis lacks what I most preferred in the NES library: a professional wrestling game. I've noticed many ads in the past for Jesse "The Body" Ventura Wrestling in magazines, but it had an "\*" denoting the fact that it may or may not be released.

I assume there is (naturally) a problem with licensing after "The Body" left the WWF for the WCW. If you have any information on this

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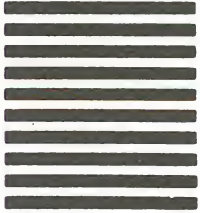
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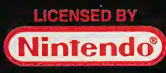


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game or any wrestling game, I would appreciate some sort of response. I have written to the Genesis people, but they have ignored me.

—Jason Patterson  
Chelsea, Oklahoma

*DreamWorks doesn't have Jesse "The Body" Ventura Wrestling on its release schedule anymore. It's a dead game. Chances are after a big-name wrestler like Ventura quits to become a mayor of a small Minnesota town, there won't be many video games named after him.*

*However, Acclaim has two Genesis wrestling games planned under its Flying Edge label: WWF Wrestlemania on cartridge and WWF Mega Wrestlemania for the upcoming Sega CD. Takara will also be bringing a wrestling game of sorts to the Genesis with King of the Monsters, originally made famous on the Neo-Geo system. Finally, rumor comes to us that Sega may be creat-*

*ing the "ultimate" wrestling game for the Genesis in the spirit of Streets of Rage.*



**FIGHTING RATINGS**

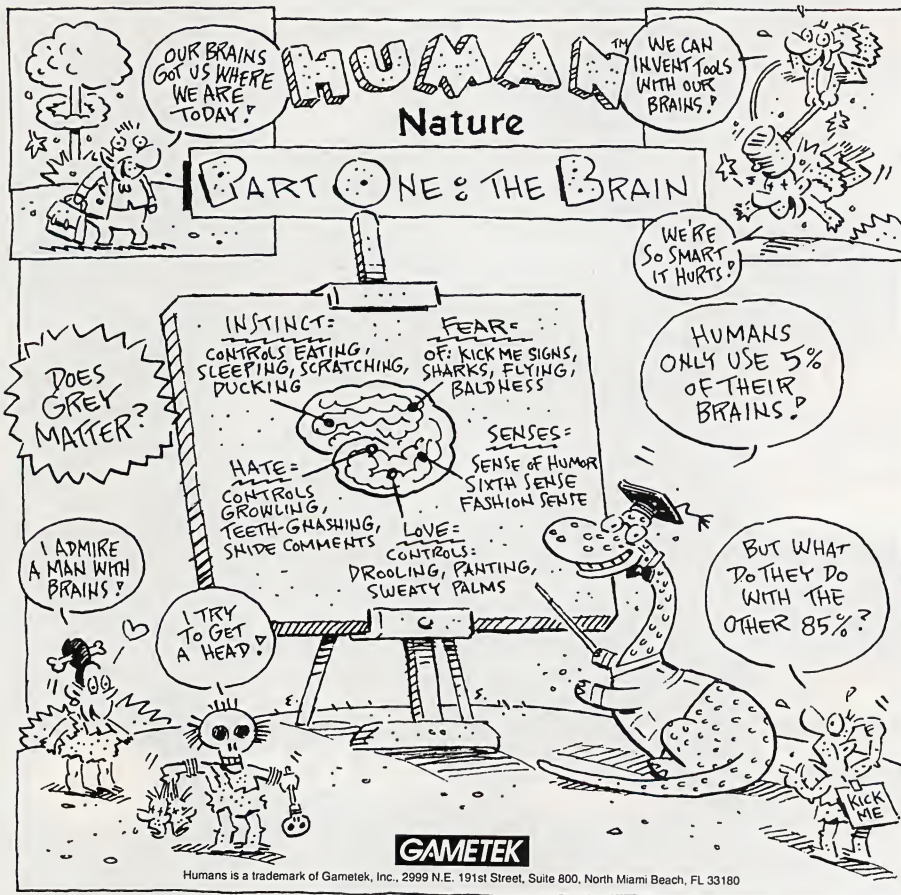
I saw your ratings for *Street Fighter II* in your June issue, yet in another magazine's June issue I read that the cart was not ready for reviewing, but was only a preliminary version. If so, why did you review it? If you had waited to review the final version, the ratings would be higher because it's a spectacular game.

—Yun Huh  
San Jose, California

*Though the cartridge we reviewed was technically a preview version (not a production copy), Capcom gave us the okay to review it. For the most part, it was in final form when we reviewed it. We stand by our ratings. And we agree that it's a spectacular game.*

**CORRECTIONS**

- This is a first: a correction of a correction. This is the second time we've made this mistake, and one day we'll get it right, but, unfortunately, August 1992 wasn't it. The author of the *4-D Boxing* strategy in the June 1992 issue was John Schnyder, *not* Schneider. Now excuse us while we practice. Schnyder, Schnyder, Schnyder...
- Our review of *Camerica's Bee 52*, in the August issue, had a misstatement. The game was never intended to be priced under \$30, as we alluded to. This was an incorrect assumption on our part.
- There was some question as to which version of *Ys III* was used for our April and May 1992 strategy guides; it was the TurboGrafx-16 version. Please take into account that there may be differences in versions for other systems.



**MODEM OWNERS!**

VG&CE can be reached on-line with comments and hints. We'd be happy to hear from you. Electronic Mail can be sent to us on the following systems:

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- DELPHI: VIDGAMES
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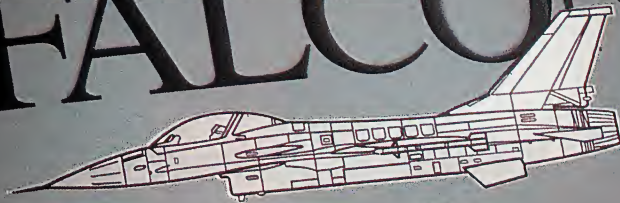
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We could tell you about the superb graphics we put into Falcon 3.0™. And the incredibly real F-16 feel. And the sensational scope that delivers everything from Instant Action arcade excitement to plotting your own Red Flag training missions to engaging in a different campaign every time you play. But we couldn't say it half as well as the critics have said it. Look at the high marks they've given Falcon 3.0.

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PETER OLAFSON, COMPUTE

*"The graphics are stunning, the sound is incredible and the game play is a rush."*

DAVID ETHEL, VIDEO GAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

*"It's not so much a game system as it is a way of life."*

EVAN BROOKS, COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

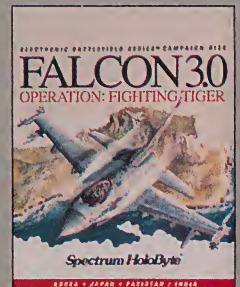
*"Realistic, contoured terrain. Your view from the cockpit is the best in the flight simulator world. And Falcon's user interface is slick and easy to use."* PC GAMES EDITORS

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 STRATEGY PLUS EDITORS

*"The most complete and accurate jet fighter simulation to be found this side of a security clearance. Period."*  
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 COMPUTER GAME REVIEW EDITORS



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6763 The Feeling I Get  
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6757 The Male Monster From The Id  
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Need For Not Capitol

"... wild fluctuations in styles taking in insane varispeed muso bits, violent metal thrashers with flailing drums, beautiful pop songs, spacey mantras and seemingly anything that has the desired bloodflow of free expression, fear, paranoia and madness."

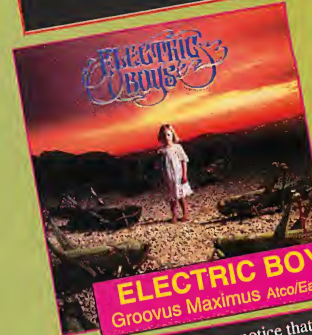
6762 Smile  
6761 Resist



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6749 Mary In The Mystery World  
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**E**ven the best player has trouble with a game now and again, but where can you turn for help? VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT has designed *Tip Sheet* to give you, the reader, answers to questions such as, "How do I defeat the end boss on this level?" or, "I've looked everywhere, but I can't find the blue vase." So if you're having a problem with a game, write to us, and our group of experts will do everything they can to solve it. Send your letters to:

VG&CE,  
9171 Wilshire Blvd.,  
Suite 300  
Beverly Hills, CA 90210  
Attn: *Tip Sheet*



BY  
CHRIS BIENIEK

I was glad to see you answer a question about the Lynx version of *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* in the August issue's *Tip Sheet*. I'm having a problem at a much later stage of this challenging game; I've just reached Europe 1700 A.D. How will I ever get through the building if the table and chair keep jumping out to maul me as soon as I walk through the door?

—Thomas Powell  
Toronto, Ontario

*Take a close look at the pattern of the carpeting inside the haunted house, Thomas. (If you thought the carpet in Lynx Casino was loud, you ain't seen nothin' yet!)*

*Seriously, look for the green dots on the floor. If you move carefully through the room, you'll find that the furniture will not attack you as long as you are standing on a green dot. You can "bait" the tables and chairs by stepping off the green dots in different directions, a trick you'll have to use in order to get the haunted furniture to move away from each successive safe spot.*

SNK's *Last Resort* is an incredibly tough shooter for the Neo-Geo. I can't even get past the second level! Do you have any tips that would help me to get through the corridor with all the guns on the ceiling and on the floor? Those little orange bullets are everywhere!

—Frank Noone  
Wayland, Missouri

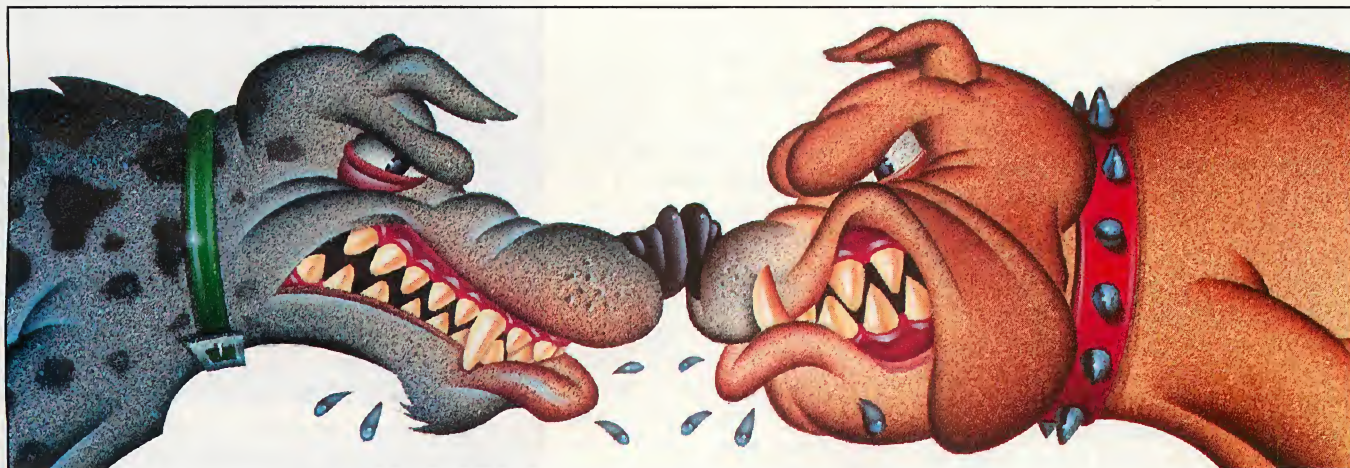
*Don't forget that the "unit" is a very flexible weapon with a variety of uses. Before you enter this troublesome area, be sure that the last unit you pick up is red and not blue. With the red "ground unit," you'll be able to plow through those guns without breaking a sweat.*

*As you enter the narrow opening that leads to the gun-filled corridor, move your ship around until the floating unit is positioned at an angle in front of you, either to the upper right or to the lower right.*

*You don't need to charge the unit very long before you let it go—the guns can be destroyed with even a small charge of the unit. The important thing is to fire the unit as many times as possible as you pass through the corridor. Keep firing to the upper right and lower right, and the unit will travel along the walls and wipe out most of the guns before they can crowd the screen with those annoying orange missiles.*



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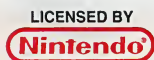
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I am having some trouble with Electronic Arts' *Might and Magic—Gates to Another World* for the Sega Genesis. How can I decode the Red, Green and Yellow messages in the game? How many messages are there?

—T.L. Earnest Jr.  
Christiansburg, Virginia

*You're not the only one to request this information, Tommy. In the past month, we received similar letters from Alex Scouras of Bastrop, Texas, Herb Myers of Fairchance, Pennsylvania, and Thane Ahrens of Lockhart, South Carolina.*

*There are 22 color-coded messages in the game. Yellow messages are meant to help you travel, and the Green and Red messages will help you in your quest to save Cron from destruction. The messages must be decoded in a specific order, and you also need to find the interleave of each color. Here's a list of all of the messages in the proper order and the locations of the three interleaves:*

*Yellow Message Locations:*

1. E3 X7, Y2
2. E4 X2, Y11
3. D3 X13, Y4
4. D4 X12, Y10
5. E4 X7, Y15
6. D4 X14, Y15
7. D3 X5, Y10
8. E3 X0, Y3
9. D3 X8, Y2

*Green Message Locations:*

1. B2 X14, Y9
2. B3 X12, Y2
3. B2 X14, Y5
4. B3 X12, Y9

*Red Message Locations:*

1. Fire X6, Y15
2. Water X0, Y8
3. Earth X7, Y0
4. Fire X15, Y7
5. Air X0, Y7
6. Earth X9, Y6
7. Water X8, Y0
8. Earth X15, Y8
9. Air X7, Y15

*The Yellow interleave can be found in Castle Xabran at coordinates X13, Y12.*

*The Green interleave can be found in the cavern below Middlegate at coordinates X8, Y14.*

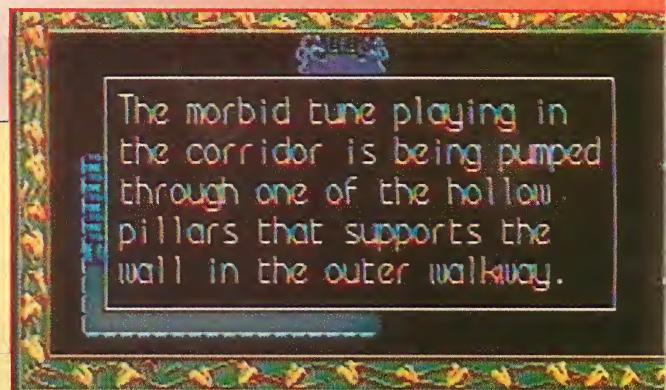
*The Red interleave can be found in Castle Xabran at coordinates X13, Y4.*

I am really stuck in Book I of *Ys—Book I & II* for my TurboGrafx-CD. After having reached the 11th floor in Darm Tower, I entered the room in the center of the chamber where the morbid music plays. The character in that room says that if I break into a certain pillar, I would stop the music and free him. Well, I've tried to break open every pillar on this entire level, and I've just about given up! Could you please tell me what pillar he is referring to, and how to break into it?

—Robert Fitterman  
Greenlawn, New York

*My pleasure, Robert. To find the pillar on the outer walkway, just leave the room, exit the hallway and go to the right. Pass through the next doorway you see and take the stairs to the tenth floor. Go straight up through this level until you see the other flight of stairs, which leads to the other side of the 11th floor.*

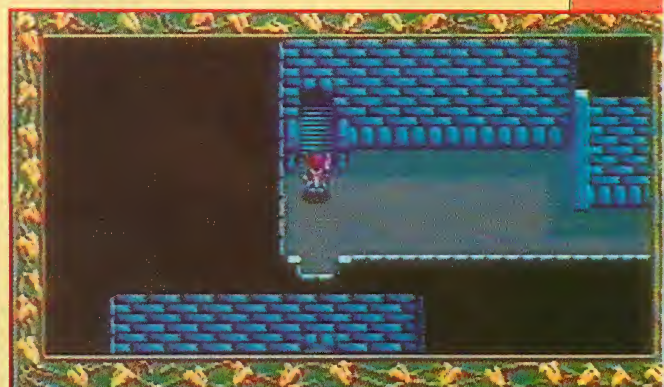
*Note that the pillars on the outer walkway have scary-looking faces on them. Choose the hammer from your inventory screen, and you'll be able to shatter the third pillar to the left of the door. You'll meet up with the character you saved when you reach the 13th floor. 📍*



H.P. 047/115 EXP 04548/04900 GOLD 342

PLAYER

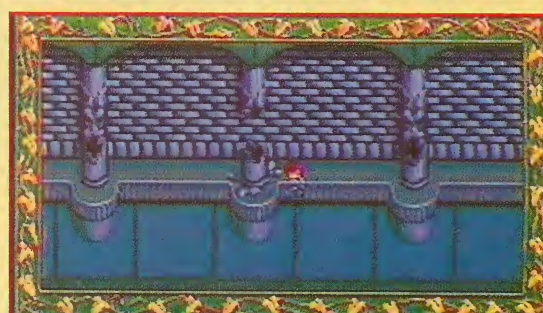
ENEMY



H.P. 115/115 EXP 04564/04900 GOLD 3442

PLAYER

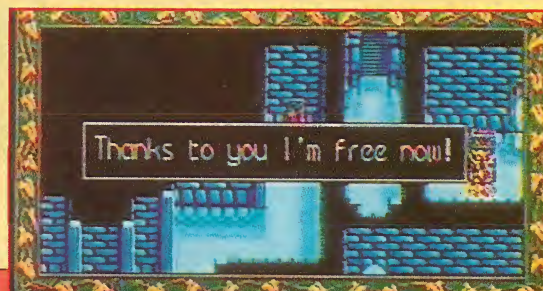
ENEMY



H.P. 115/115 EXP 04564/04900 GOLD 34429

PLAYER

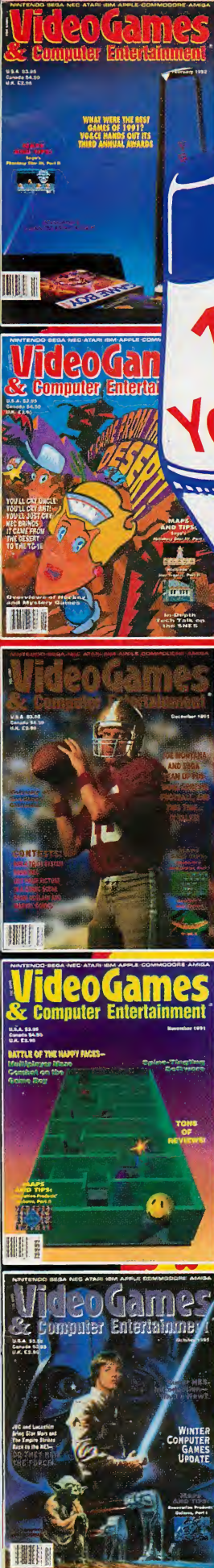
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PLAYER

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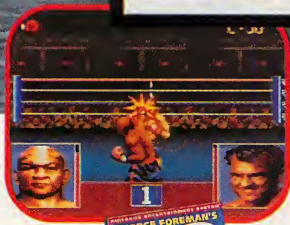
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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

### Court Awards Lewis Galoob \$15 million

A U.S. Ninth Circuit Court judge in San Francisco awarded Lewis Galoob a \$15 million judgment against Nintendo of America to compensate the Game Genie manufacturer for lost profit from July 1990 to July 1991 when Galoob was prohibited from selling its game enhancer due to Nintendo of America's lawsuit. The Redmond, Washington-based Nintendo says it plans to appeal the decision.

Galoob has suspended its dividend on the convertible exchanges, saying it had not met its earnings targets. Even though the company lost \$782,000 during the first quarter, it had used only \$3.5 million of a \$40 million line of revolving credit. If Galoob ultimately receives the \$15 million, Galoob would take \$11.5 million and then split the remaining \$3.5 with its licensors, Codemasters Software Co. of London and Camerica Corp. of Ontario.

### EA to Produce Sega CD Titles

Electronic Arts and Sega of America have signed a multiyear agreement in which EA will continue as a Sega licensee for the Sega Genesis cartridges and gain the license to produce Sega CD products. Sega will continue to be the exclusive distributor of Electronic Arts' Genesis products in Europe.

### Sega Establishes Youth Charity

Sega has established the Sega Youth Education and Health Foundation Charitable Trust in order to address education and health needs, starting with a \$3 million donation from Sega of America and Sega Enterprises Ltd.

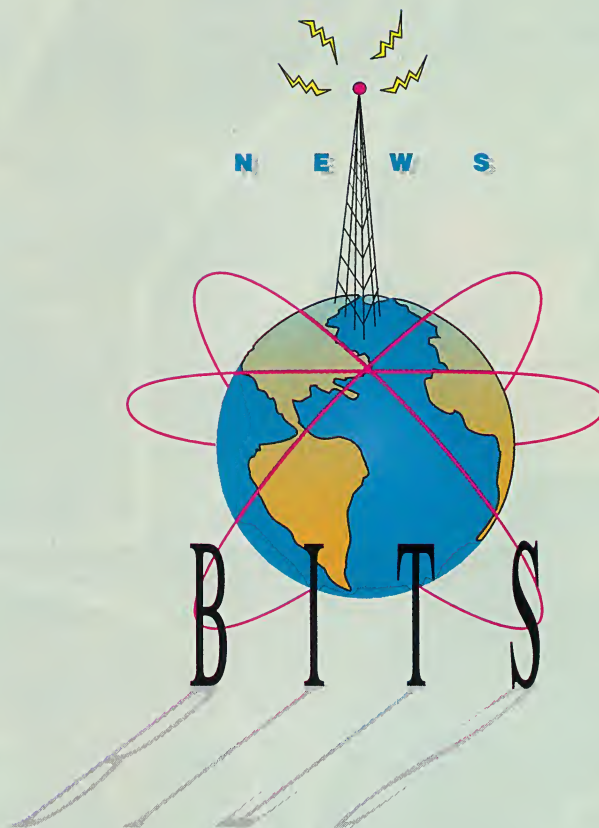
The Trust charter states that Sega will contribute to programs in four areas: national education and health development; student scholarships; regional youth (6-18 years) education and health programs; and local San Francisco Bay Area youth charities.

Organizations wishing to apply for grants should write for guidelines from the Sega Youth and Health Foundation Charitable Trust, 130 Shoreline Drive, Redwood City, CA 94065.

### Advanced Gravis & Electronic Arts Join to Support UltraSound

Advanced Gravis and Electronic Arts have announced that a special version of *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* which supports Advanced Gravis' new soundboard UltraSound will be released with the soundboard for a package price of \$219.95.

## COMPILED BY DAVID S. MOSKOWITZ



### TTI Launches TurboDuo

Turbo Technologies Inc. has announced the configuration and price of the TurboDuo CD-ROM-based video-game system. The left half of the TurboDuo will be used for TurboChip games currently used on the TG-16, while the right side will be a CD-ROM player equipped to accommodate all existing TurboGrafx-CD games as well as the new, expanded memory Super CD games. The Super System ROM built into the TurboDuo provides four times the memory currently available to the TurboGrafx-CD, which means less disc access time and more graphics and sound.

The TurboDuo will premiere in mid-October and will carry a suggested retail price of \$299.99. *Bonk's Adventure*, *Bonk's Revenge*, *Ys—Book I & II* and the Super CD game *Gate of Thunder* will compose the two-disc package included with the Turbo-

Duo. In addition, the TurboDuo will include the *Ninja Spirit* TurboChip game and \$50 in discount coupons for additional software.



Owners of the TG-16 may purchase the Super System card, \$50 in software coupons and the CD containing *Gate of Thunder*, *Bonk's Adventure* and *Bonk's Revenge* for \$95. The Super System card will not be sold in stores but will be available through an 800 number which TTI will establish immediately prior to release.

### Prodigy Introduces Baby-sitters Club Service

The Prodigy Service now offers a Custom Choice feature based on Ann Martin's series of *Baby-sitters Club* books. For a \$5.95 per month charge, Prodigy subscribers will have access to a number of *Baby-sitters Club*-related features, including an Interactive Story in which members vote



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And don't get caught

behind the eight-ball.



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CIRCLE #109 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Complete with an expandable 256K on-board sound, the UltraSound will be compatible with both the Ad Lib and Sound Blaster. The UltraSound alone will retail for \$199.95.

**Sierra Acquires Bright Star Technology**

Sierra On-Line of Oakhurst, California, has acquired educational software publisher Bright Star Technology Inc. for \$1 million plus up to \$2 million over the next five years, depending on Bright Star's performance. Sierra will use its existing technology to add color to Bright Star products such as *Alphabet Blocks* and *Talking Tiles* and to create IBM PC versions. Sierra, in turn, hopes to incorporate Bright Star's HyperAnimation, voice synchronization and, eventually, synthetic voice technologies into its games.

The acquisition was the end result of Bright Star's search for a publisher with which to develop software. Bright Star's founder, Elon Gasper, and the firm's president, Alan J. Higginson, will remain in executive positions.

**Holiday Television Special to Feature Electronic Gaming**

*Holiday Spirit*, a three-part special on Thanksgiving, Hannukah and Christmas, will feature a special segment on electronic-entertainment ideas when it airs later this year. Spencer Christian, weatherman for ABC's *Good Morning America*, will host the show, which is produced by Brookstone Productions of Deerfield Beach, Florida. The show is expected to be available to 65% of American television viewers.

**Top Coin-Ops for July 1992**

Figures are courtesy of *RePlay* magazine, based on an earnings-opinion poll of operators.

**Best Upright Videos**

1. *Street Fighter II: Championship Edition* by Capcom
2. *Terminator 2* by Midway
3. *Sunset Riders* by Konami
4. *Double Axle* by Taito
5. *Captain America* by Data East
6. *Space Gun* by Taito
7. *Turbo Out Run* by Sega
8. *Beast Busters* by SNK
9. *Spider-Man* by Sega
10. *Super High Impact* by Midway

**Best Deluxe Videos**

1. *X-Men* by Konami
2. *Steel Talons* by Atari



BSC Are you ready to join us? Choose this button to sign up... Enrollment Info



for their favorite ending; Ask Ann, an area where the book's author answers questions from fans; and advice on topics ranging from dating to diapering.

A portion of the profit from all Baby-sitters Club licensed merchandise goes to the Ann M. Martin foundation, which contributes to children's causes, education and literacy programs, and homeless relief organizations.

Modem owners interested in joining Prodigy can call (800) PRODIGY, and Prodigy subscribers interested in the service should [Jump]: BSC.

**Sharp Releases Video Projectors Safe for Video Games**

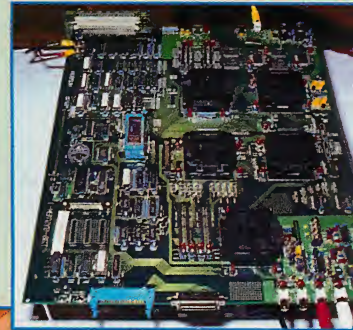
Sharp Electronics Corporation has released the XV-S250U high-resolution LCD video projection, the top of its SharpVision line of projectors. Unlike normal projection televisions, users of the XV-S250U can safely play video games with no risk of damage to the unit. These SharpVision



products are not television receivers and require a cable or VCR input to watch normal television. The XG-2000, a special industrial model, allows for a computer connection. Both models retail for \$7,495; anyone interested in them can call (800) BE-SHARP.

**Hudson of Japan Unveils 32-Bit System**

At a press conference in the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan, Hudson Soft celebrated its 20th anniversary by introducing its new 32-bit development system. Named the HuC62, this system is specifically designed to easily manipulate graphic images. The HuC62 uses five proprietary custom chips in its architecture, the HuC6261 Color Palette Video Interface, the HuC6271 Full Color Animation Decoder, the



HuC6272 Data Transmitter, the HuC6230 Sound Decoder Mixer and, at its heart, the HuC62320 32-bit CPU.

Due to the HuC62's digital format, it is expected to be applicable to video-game animation and presentation, marketing and promotional presentations, and is naturally tailor-made for multimedia use.

Hudson explained that this system is extremely versatile and is expecting it to be compatible with various different hardware formats. It considers the price range low enough to be suited for home consumer electronics use. If everything goes according to schedule, we may see the first application use by the end of the year in Japan.

**Software Publishers Association Launches Two-Pronged Attack Against Piracy**

The Software Publishers Association (SPA) and Consolidated Micro Services

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their towns and fields. But the day came when the crown passed to an evil King. He used the powers of the crown against his people until Princess Robyn released the gems. Now, the spell of Gemfire is broken, and you are in search of its magical stones!

Segas Genesis screen shot shown.



Rivers and fences can aide your troops when you forge into war.

Segas Genesis screen shot shown.



Restore your kingdom to prosperity by developing and working the fields.

SNES screen shot shown.



With a gem in hand you control the powers of a magician.

SNES screen shot shown.



Elves of merit bring good luck charms to trust worthy rulers!



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3. *Race Drivin'* by Atari
4. *Road Riot* by Atari
5. *Final Lap 2* by Namco
6. *Mad Dog McCree* by Betson/ALG
7. *Hard Drivin'* by Atari
8. *GP Rider* by Sega
9. *G-Loc* by Sega
10. *Galaxy Force* by Sega

**Best Coin-Op Software**

1. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
2. *Aero Fighters* by McO'River
3. *Steel Gunner 2* by Namco
4. *Fatal Fury* by SNK
5. *Total Carnage* by Midway
6. *Wrestlefest* by Technos
7. *G.I. Joe* by Konami
8. *Rim Rockin' B-Ball* by Strata
9. *Baseball Stars 2* by SNK
10. *TMNT II* by Konami

**Top IBM PC Games for May 1992**

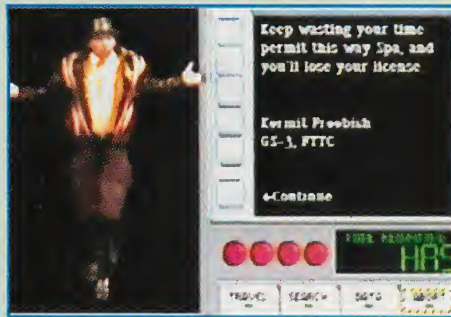
The list of top-selling computer software was compiled by PC Research of Washington, D.C., based on sales data received from Software Etc., Electronics Boutique, Babbages and Waldensoftware.

**Top 10 IBM PC Games**

1. *Hardball III* by Accolade
2. *LINKS—Troon North Course Disk* by Access
3. *Ultima VII* by Origin
4. *Aces of the Pacific* by Sierra On-Line
5. *Civilization* by MicroProse
6. *SimCity* by Maxis
7. *Star Trek—25th Anniversary* by Interplay
8. *Risk* by Virgin
9. *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* by Lucasfilm Games
10. *F117A Stealth Fighter 2.0* by MicroProse

**Top 10 IBM PC Education Games**

1. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
2. *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* by Software Toolworks
3. *Where in the U.S.A. Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
4. *New Math Blaster Plus* by Davidson
5. *Playroom* by Brøderbund
6. *Reader Rabbit 1* by The Learning Company
7. *Oregon Trail* by MECC
8. *Reader Rabbit 2* by The Learning Company
9. *Treasure Mountain* by The Learning Company
10. *Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund



(CMS) have announced a settlement in SPA members Fifth Generation Systems Inc., Lotus Development Corporation, Microsoft Corporation, Novell Inc. and WordPerfect Corporation's suit against CMS and its owner, Gary Johnson. CMS allegedly loaded hard drives with illegal copies of software published by the firms represented by the SPA.

According to the SPA, Johnson paid \$31,613; although neither party was to disclose the amount in writing, SPA employees were free to release it over the phone. Johnson contends that the SPA has no right to release the number and says he settled the case more out of a concern over the \$150,000 in legal fees it would cost to fight the suit than out of fear of any potential verdict. "Big Brother is too Big for his Britches," Johnson commented on the legal action.

In addition to the cash settlement, Johnson is required, under penalty of perjury, to conduct two audits of CMS machines over the next year to ensure that they contain no illegal copies. The SPA also has the right to conduct one unannounced audit of CMS before July 1994.

Johnson originally came to the attention of the SPA through a call on their antipiracy hotline ([800] 388-7478), in addition to a member's request to investigate. Software publishers have the option of legally pursuing cases through their own means or letting the SPA take action on their behalf. All funds awarded in SPA actions like the CMS case go to the SPA's Copyright Protection Fund, which uses the money to cover legal expenses and antipiracy promotional campaigns.

These promotional campaigns have begun to target younger audiences with the premiere of "Don't Copy That Floppy," a rap video aimed at fourth- to eighth-grade students. The SPA distributed 2,000 copies of the video and accompanying lesson plans to teachers at the National Education



Association Conference in July. In addition to M.E. Hart's performance as rapper MC Double Def DP, the nine-minute video includes interviews with programmers at America On-Line and scenes from *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* and *Oregon Trail*.

**Camera to Release Aladdin, and Game Genies for the Genesis and Game Boy**

Camera has designed the Aladdin, a cartridge for the NES with interchangeable game chips designed to reduce software prices. Scheduled for a January 1993 release, the Aladdin will cost approximately \$29.95, and the games will be \$19.95. Camera is also planning a package with the Aladdin and one game for \$39.95.

Camera games such as *Micro Machines*, the *Dizzy* games, *Ultimate Stunt Man*, *Bignose the Caveman*, the *Quattro* compilations, *Firehawk* and *Bee 52* will have Aladdin versions available. New Camera games will be released in both Aladdin and standard cartridge format.

Nintendo visited the Camera booth at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show and knows about the Aladdin, but, at this point, has given no indication of potential legal action to prevent the Aladdin's release, as they attempted with the Game Genie.

The Game Genie for the Sega Genesis will be available soon and will retail for \$59.95. Codes for more than 100 games will be included with the Genie. Camera has also developed a Game Genie for the Game Boy, but it will not be available until late November.





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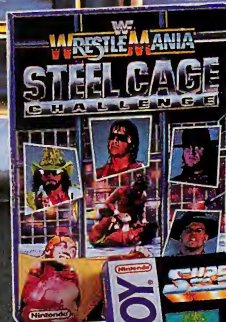
GO FOR THE TAG TEAM  
TITLE WITH CANVAS-  
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CHOOSE FROM 10 OF  
YOUR FAVORITE WWF  
SUPERSTARS.

Screen shots shown are from NES™ version.

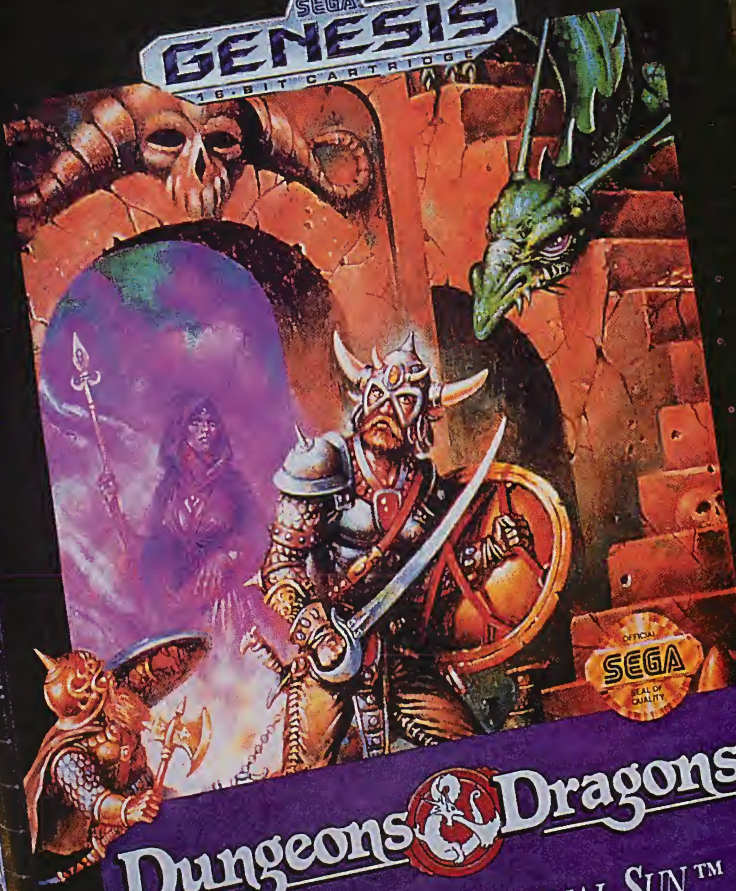
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WARRIORS OF THE ETERNAL SUN™

ROLE PLAYING GAME

DESIGNED BY DAN ABRAHAMSON  
ILLUSTRATED BY JIM HAYES



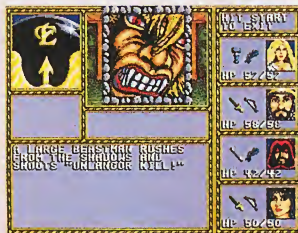
sharpen thy sword. Raise thy shield. Cast thy mightiest spell. For the **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™** game hath joined forces with **Sega™ Genesis™**.

**D**aybreak, the darkest hour of the final day. Furious goblins massing for a decisive attack surround your characters and their liege lord, the Duke. But before they can strike, an immortal force intervenes—transporting the Duke's castle and its occupants to a mystical valley. Where a red



sun flares eternally at high noon. And your characters are surrounded by mutant Beastmen. Locals who are anything but friendly.

**W**elcome to **WARRIORS OF THE ETERNAL SUN™**, the first official **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™** role playing game



for Sega Genesis. It has all the classic spells, weapons, experience points and levels of the **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** game. And characters each player can create themselves.

**D**escend into a world with dungeon levels so real your characters can scope them out, and fight it out in real time, first person 3-D. While automatically mapping their subterranean progress.

**A**nd on the surface, make sure your characters are extra vigilant. For at every turn, their battle tactics will determine success. The question is, can your characters

live long enough in this mysterious new world to forge strong, new alliances before the castle is attacked? And can they unravel the dark, buried secret of the entire valley before it drives the Duke hopelessly insane?

**T**hrow in your favorite **D&D™** spells, weapons, tunnels, powers, good guys and bad guys, and one thing is certain. On your own, your characters might make it through **WARRIORS OF THE ETERNAL SUN**.



Or perhaps you'll have to consult the hint book\* for survival tips. But either way, it's going to be a very long day.



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THE CHOICE IS SIMPLE. THE CHOICE IS SEGA. Genesis gives you more than 150 hit games, hot titles like Sonic The Hedgehog, Kid Chameleon, Sports Talk Baseball, and Joe Montana II, Sports Talk Football, and the lowest price in 16-bit systems. \*Hint book sold separately. Cover illustration ©1982 Clyde Caldwell. Used with permission. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, and WARRIORS OF THE ETERNAL SUN are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. and manufactured under a sublicense from Strategic Simulations, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved. SEGA and Genesis are trademarks of SEGA. Game titles are trademarks of SEGA or its licensees. See Individual box for details. ©1992 SEGA. All rights reserved.

Tips are graded on a scale of one to five joysticks. The more joysticks that are colored in, the more valuable the hint.

Blow the dust off those old games, and try out some of our new hints! If you have some great hints and tips for us, just put them on a piece of paper, and send them to: VG&CE, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210, ATTN: Easter Egg Hunt. The author of each new tip we use will receive \$10. Write neatly and be sure to include your name and address!



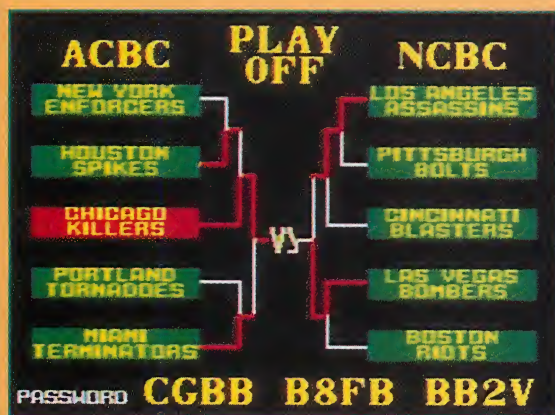
In response to the tremendous reader demand, we're finally going to include Game Genie codes in Easter Egg Hunt on a regular basis! Look for another outrageous Robocod trick, as well as some additional information on the now-famous Street Fighter II code.

## Cyberball

(SEGA FOR THE GENESIS)



To watch the final ending sequence with the Chicago Killers as champions, input this password: CGBB B8FB BB2V



## Batman Returns

(ATARI FOR THE LYNX)



After the motorcycles burst out of the huge gift-wrapped package in Level One, send the Caped Crusader into the opening in the right side of the box. He'll find a life power-up and ten batarangs inside.



## James Pond II Codename: Robocod

(ELECTRONIC ARTS FOR THE GENESIS)



We received such a great response from the Robocod Easter egg in the July issue that we had to tell you about another. In the sports level, you can get infinite lives by picking up items in this order: Lips, Ice cream, Violin, Earth and Snowman.

continued on page 32

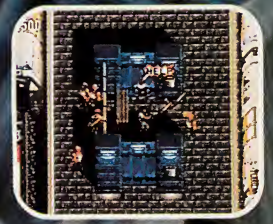


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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

continued from page 30



**GAME GENIE CODES**

**Bee 52**

(CAMERICA FOR THE NES)



For use with Galoob's NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer.

- SXSGOSVK—Infinite lives
- SZXNXTAX—Keep power-ups
- GXNKNTAL+GZOKUYAP—Fly quicker
- GZSSTTEI—No stun
- PAXYKGLA—1 life
- TAXYKGLA—6 lives
- PAXYKGLE—9 lives
- AXKEGZGO—Slow down timer
- ZEKEGZGO—Speed up timer

**GAME GENIE CODES**

**NES Play Action Football**

(NINTENDO FOR THE NES)



For use with Galoob's NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer.

- ZUSVIKTP—50 seconds to choose play
- ZESVIKTO—10 seconds to choose play
- TOKYLKYE—30 minutes a quarter
- ZEKYLKYE—10 minutes a quarter
- KEKLUNSE—No time outs for Player Two or computer
- TEUUNYLA+TEUUNYLA—6 time outs each half
- PEUUNYLA+PEUUNYLA—1 time out each half

**Street Fighter II**

(CAPCOM FOR THE SUPER NES)



Here are a few interesting observations regarding the "player vs. player" code that appeared in the September issue of VG&CE.

First of all, if you are having trouble getting the code to work, please be aware that you must turn the SNES on and hit the reset button at any time after the "Licensed by Nintendo" message disappears. Most of our readers were able to figure this out by themselves when they found that the code never works the first time you try it—just hit **RESET** and perform the trick again.

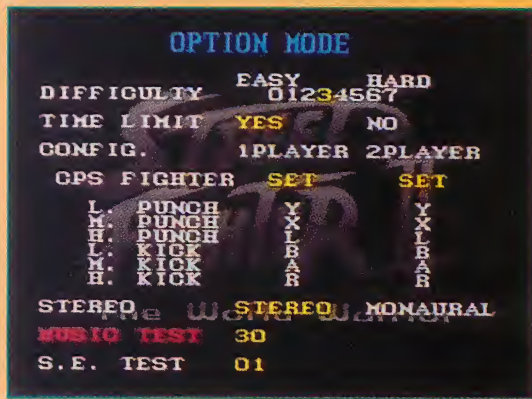
If you missed it, here's the code: Down, R button, Up, L button, Y, B. These commands must be issued while the Capcom logo is on the screen. There's no need to press the additional buttons X and A, as reported in some other publications, unless you own the Japanese Super Famicom version of the game.

In addition to giving you the ability to play a two-player game with the same character, you'll find that you can play through the one-player game as a character with the alternate *Champion Edition* colors if you choose your character by pressing **START** instead of one of the colored buttons.

Another interesting by-product of this Easter egg is revealed on the "Option Mode" screen. With the code in place, you'll find that the Music Test now allows you to listen to the previously inaccessible song #30, the music from the end of the game.

Finally, our editors have discovered another feature of the game that isn't mentioned in the instruction manual. If you hold down the **SELECT** button while

the world map is on the screen before each match, you'll enter a configuration screen that allows you to reassign the functions of the control pad buttons without returning to the Option Mode screen. This way, you can attack each opponent with a different control scheme.



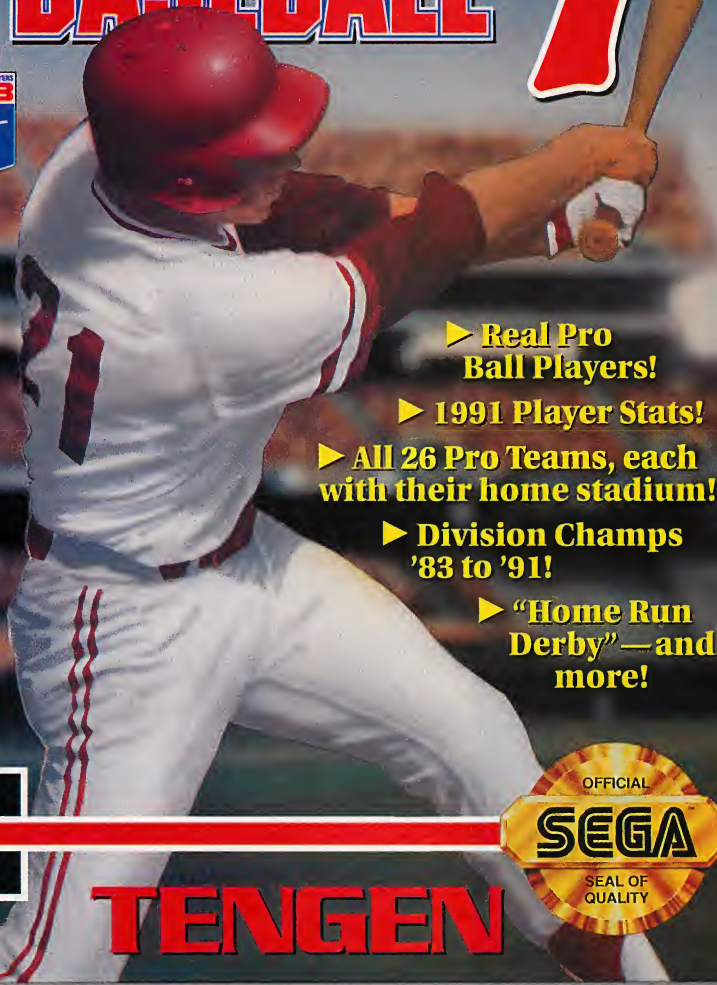
continued on page 34

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CIRCLE #112 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

continued from page 32

# It Came From the Desert

(NEC FOR THE TURBOGRAFX-16)



Here's a way to cheat and have some fun with the "Antroid Game" in *It Came From the Desert*. As soon as you enter the Antroid sequence, point the control pad to the upper right and hold down the I, II and **SELECT** buttons. The screen will go blank for a moment, then the "Antroid Game Menu Selection" will appear. You can adjust the difficulty level from this screen, and you'll also be able to choose which person the ants will get to snack on. Pick the last name on the list to get a look at one of the game's designers, and watch the ants chew off his T-shirt!

This won't interfere with your game—even if you change to a different victim, the story line will continue as usual. As detailed in last month's *Easter Egg Hunt* column, you can practice the "Antroid Game" by pressing the I and II buttons when the TurboGrafx-CD screen reads "Just a moment..." and holding them down while the game is loading.



# Blades of Steel

(ULTRA FOR THE GAME BOY)



At the first title screen (the one that says "Ultra Games"), press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, B, A and **START** to access a sound test. Kudos to Brian Churchill of Crown Point, Indiana, for providing this tip.

## GAME GENIE CODES

### Hook

(SONY IMAGESOFT FOR THE NES)



For use with Galoob's NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer.

- AEXVNTZA—Start with 1 life
- IEXVNTZA—Start with 6 lives
- AEXVNTZE—Start with 9 lives
- SZONIEVK—Infinite lives, Player One
- SZXNLEVK—Infinite lives, Player Two
- SXVIXKVK—Infinite marbles
- GZVIKIST—Infinite energy, Player One
- GZNSNIST—Infinite energy, Player Two
- AENIOIA—Maximum energy from food, Player One
- AAEINTIA—Maximum energy from food, Player Two
- AVVIXSGZ—No energy from food
- AZONPEYK+AXUTNVYK+AVVIXSGZ—Play with less energy, Player One
- AZXYTEYK+AXUTNVYK+AVVIXSGZ—Play with less energy, Player Two



## GAME GENIE CODES

### Yoshi

(NINTENDO FOR THE NES)



For use with Galoob's NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer.

- PAVAAPLA+PESTAZLA+PEXTZLLA—Need only 1 Victory Egg to win
- ZAVAAPLA+ZESTAZLA+ZEXTZLLA—Need only 2 Victory Eggs to win
- GOUYPEAZ—Short wait for next characters
- ZEUYPEAZ—Really short wait for next characters
- NNUYPEAX—Really long wait for next characters
- AVSULYZA—Freeze characters for a short time (press Down on the control pad)

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# AN AMUSEMENT PARK CALLED

## SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

**W**hen the original *Sonic the Hedgehog* was released, it set the video-game world on fire with its fast pace and innovation. Who wouldn't remember the feeling when you first saw Sonic tear through a loop in a rolled-up blue ball? Hot stuff.

Get ready for *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*, gang.

### 2 Fast, 2 Cool, 2 Day

On some yet unannounced Tuesday—or “2sday,” as Sega is calling it—in November, before Thanksgiving, Sega will unleash the new exploits of Sonic on the whole world. This is a rarity, when a game doesn't make a run through Japan first before it's let loose in America. And this will also be a multiple platform release, featuring *Sonic 2* for Genesis, Game Gear and Master System, the latter still a big force in the European gaming community. Sega expects to sell over 4 million units of the various incarnations of *Sonic 2* before the end of the year, and far more next year when the CD version is added to the fold. The Genesis version of *Sonic 2* will also be entirely manufactured in the U.S., which shows how Sega is spreading its efforts around the globe.

I had the opportunity recently to visit Sega's main offices in Redwood City—it has over 250 employees in four buildings in the U.S.—to talk to Sega's group marketing director Al Nilsen about *Sonic 2* developments. Nilsen, better known as “Mr. Sega” to many, was gracious enough to fill me in on the various details visible and behind the scenes on *Sonic 2*.

Development of the Genesis version of *Sonic 2*, which will be the focus of this article (see the accompanying sidebar for info on the Game Gear/Master System ver-

sion), is being undertaken by the original *Sonic* designers at the Sega Technical Institute in Palo Alto, California. From the discussions with Nilsen, it's obvious that, at times, Sega doesn't even know what is going into the game until a prototype is shown, so we can expect many surprises. *Sonic 2*, even at this early writing (early August), is an amusement park of features.

### I'm Sonic—Play Me

The game will offer the player (or players, but we'll tell you about that in a minute) ten basic “zones,” each consisting of two to three levels or “scenes” in an effort to again defeat Dr. Robotnik. The zone names, in no particular order and subject to change in the final release, are:

- 1) Green Hill Zone
- 2) Metropolis Zone
- 3) Hill Top Zone
- 4) Hidden Palace Zone
- 5) Oil Ocean Zone
- 6) Dust Hill Zone
- 7) Casino Night Zone
- 8) Chemical Plant Zone
- 9) Neo Green Zone
- 10) Death Egg

Nilsen notes that there will also be one “super-secret” zone, though it wasn't admitted as to how the player will get there, and we may also see the reappearance of the Labyrinth Zone, made famous in the first *Sonic* game. The memory size of 8-meg (twice the size of the first *Sonic*) gave the designers the ability to put in more bells and whistles.

For example, Sonic is shadowed by a new friend, a two-tailed fox

by Andy Eddy



player sees his own on-screen character in his respective window. According to Nilsen, this proprietary process, as yet unnamed, crams all the information of a full display into each half of the split screen. How is it done, I asked? Nilsen remained mum on the details—sorry.

### Sonic's New Twists and Turns

As I said at the beginning of the article, it was the loop in the original *Sonic* that got people's attention. Can the designers top that? You bet they can, and Nilsen detailed a bunch of them for me.

The first he noted gives the game more realistic "parallax," the effect of three dimensions that makes the display look like it has depth. This is accomplished by multiple layers of scrolling, as well as obstacles at different depths. Some items

on-screen appear to the rear, so Sonic and Tails pass in front of them, and others are farther forward so that the pair passes behind them.

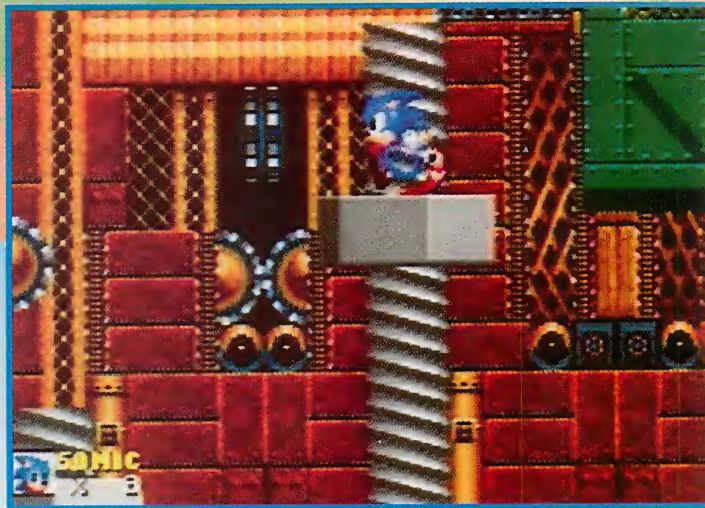
There are a ton of other enhanced graphic effects, such as a corkscrew pathway, which, similar to the original loop (yes, they're in *Sonic 2* also), must be traversed with a good head of steam. If Sonic is moving at a good pace, he'll curl through to the other side; if he isn't moving fast enough, he'll drop out to whatever lies below—likely something unhealthy.



named Tails. Tails follows his buddy Sonic everywhere, sometimes helping out, but sometimes getting Sonic in deeper trouble—a result of what Nilsen calls Tails' "youthful exuberance." You see, Tails can go ahead of Sonic to take care of enemies that lie in wait, but he may also jump ahead and set off a timed hazard that will spring when Sonic reaches it.

Even the player configurations are variable, and, because of this, Nilsen says it's "three...three...three games in one." *Sonic 2* can be played by one player, or two players, either in cooperation or competitively. In the one-player game, Tails always follows Sonic, as previously described. In the two-player cooperative game, one player plays Sonic and one takes Tails to take on Robotnik's minions. If Sonic gets too far ahead, Tails "teleports" to where Sonic is, so the lagging player doesn't get lost.

The really exciting innovation created by the developers is in the two-player competitive game. Here, the game's display shifts to a horizontally split screen, with Sonic above and Tails in the lower section. Similar to First Star's *Spy vs. Spy* computer game long ago, each



Another obstacle that will test the player's skill is a mesh tube, which appears as a rotating cylinder in his path. Much like a gerbil's running wheel, Sonic's strategy must be changed in order to successfully get through it. Sonic switches to a different perspective as he runs, and the player has to move him around the inside of the cylinder.

In a third segment, Sonic and Tails hit a section of

# Sonic 2 in 8-Bits

◆ Half the Bits,  
◆ but Hardly  
◆ Half the Fun

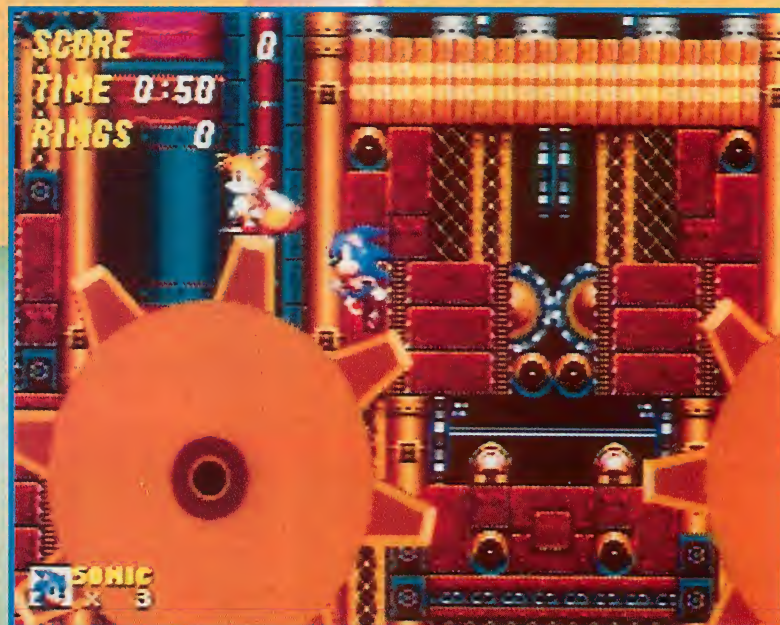
It's important to note that Game Gear and Master System owners will have a *Sonic 2* to call their own, though there are marked differences between the 8- and 16-bit versions. While its look is pure *Sonic*, the design is fresh—only 20% of the game's concept will be taken from its Genesis big brother. For example, Sonic will have a few different modes of transportation to get around: running, hang gliding and riding—Indiana Jones-like—in a coal cart.

Another difference is the understandable fact that the 8-bit *Sonic 2* will only be a one-player game. However, there will be a ton of activity for that solo player, in the form of six zones, each comprising three levels. Here's the zone list:

- 1) Green Hill Zone
- 2) Sky Hi Zone
- 3) Aqua Lake Zone
- 4) Under Ground Zone
- 5) Gimmick Mountain
- 6) Scramble Egg Zone

While this version of Sonic's battle against Robotnik is only 8-bit, suffice it to say that it compares well to its 16-bit brother.

—A.E.

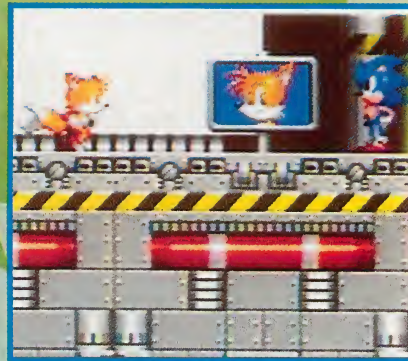


nuts and bolts, with elevated platforms that seem impossible to reach. The key is to stand on the head of a bolt and unscrew it by running on top of it. As the bolt spins, it raises out of the surface of the ground and lifts the duo into the air toward the platform they need to reach. If the pair wait too long to jump off, they'll get smushed between the bolt and the ceiling.

## The Sonic Strategy

Nintendo has taken Mario into a position of prominence, both in video games and outside as well. You can see him everywhere, from lunch boxes to TV shows to clothing. All this has enhanced the character's recognizability. There's no question that Sonic is the flagship of Sega's product line in a similar manner, and this simultaneous release of the various *Sonic* games undoubtedly paves the way for Sega to compete against Nintendo in the growing 16-bit console wars this Christmas. Sega has an advertising budget of \$65 million, and Ellen Beth Van Buskirk, Sega's director of marketing services, notes that *Sonic 2* represents the "lion's share" of that figure. From what we've seen, it will be a very interesting holiday season.

If we can get Santa and his elves away from the game screen, that is. 🎅



continued on page 40





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## Up Sega's Genesis Sleeve— A Pair of Hot Works in Progress

**C**ertainly *Sonic 2* isn't the only thing that Sega has in its bag of tricks—it was confirmed that nine major titles would be released by year's end. When I went to visit Sega in northern California in late July to see *Sonic 2* in action, I was surprised to be shown one of the games in the 1992 lineup and one beyond. Here are some descriptions for you to chew on in the meantime:



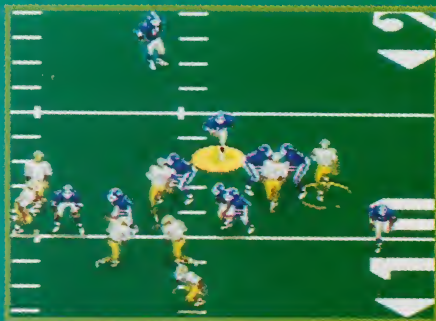
### Dolphin

It's not virtual reality, and it wasn't shown or hidden backstage at the CES. However, it's definitely blockbuster material. Contrary to what other publications are printing, VG&CE has received the first verified look at this highly anticipated title.

Though the name *Dolphin* is for the time being a working title, and my sneak peek was a nonplayable demo of the first level, the game is well defined. In the form in which I saw it, the feature character could be moved through the water at various depths and made to leap out of the water in a few different ways: from simple looping jumps to somersaults. Also in place was a monitor of the dolphin's air supply—diving him too deep, swimming him too fast underwater or a "hit" from enemies depletes his supply faster, while a quick visit to the surface replenishes it.

Okay, you can swim this dolphin around and under the ocean, but what kind of game does that make? Sega is molding this concept into quite the non-standard adventure, unlike anything that has ever been released. As with any adventure, you'll have to pass certain milestones in each level before you can progress, though there is one catch: This dolphin won't speak in English, instead finding other methods of communication. Sega's Al Nilsen was understandably vague, saving many of the game's surprises until the expected public unveiling of the "Dolphin" at this winter's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas for a 1993 release. However, it's a sight to see, even in its extremely limited form—it will tip the scales at 8-meg when it's completed. Two years in the works, the animation is so fluid and realistic that it's easy to forget you are playing a game. Nilsen

offered that most people trying it immediately took to the control scheme (one button for swimming; a second for superfast swimming; and the third to bring up a sonar screen, which serves as the player's map) and quickly lost themselves in that alone. That's quite a statement for a prototype.



### NFL Sportstalk Football '93 Starring Joe Montana

Here's a familiar name with tons of additions. How about three different views, changeable as much as desired during the game? How about digitized animations to let the player run, straight-arm, dive and even spin around opponents? How about the real teams of the NFL? In the words of a famous spaghetti sauce commercial, "It's in there!"

Sega has strived to make what I'll call *Montana '93* a substantial improvement over the previous installment, and this 12-meg cart won't disappoint. Rather than just add more digitized speech—as has been accomplished—totally new and innovative features have been added. The designers have utilized the actual teams' playbooks, with the advice of an offensive coordinator, so teams like the Houston Oilers, for example, will have a series of run-and-shoot plays. Though the actual player names couldn't be used, rest assured that each "number" on the video team will be similar to its relative number on the real team. "Number 20 on the Detroit Lions will have the same characteristics as Barry Sanders," Sega's Greg Suarez told me.

The real kick in *Montana '93*, however, is the selection of viewpoints for watching the game. There are three perspectives that can be chosen: "sideline" or side-scrolling view; "end zone" or rear view; and the "blimp" view, which gives you a display similar to a coach's blackboard. What's best is that the view can be switched anytime the play selection screen comes up. Suarez noted that, for strategy purposes, he uses the sideline view for defensive play, but switches to the rear view during offense to spot those elusive holes in the defensive line.

*Montana '93* is expected to have an October 1992 release.

—A.E.



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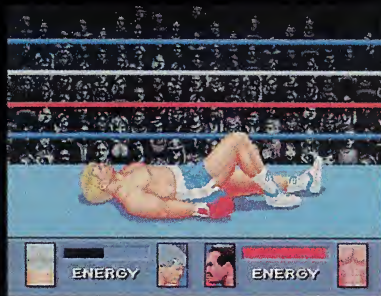
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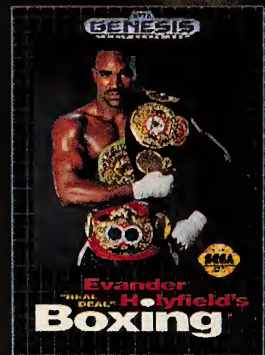
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## A LOOK AT SEGA'S NEW MULTIMEDIA SYSTEM AND SOFTWARE LINEUP

CD or not to CD? That is the question. Most American gamers don't know what to expect, or exactly what the true value of CD gaming is. Is it better graphics? Is it better sound? Is it a better game? Actually, it's a little of everything. A CD game doesn't necessarily mean that it will have better graphics, but instead what it will have is "more" graphics and a more advanced way of using those graphics (e.g., more back-



Above: *Wing Commander*.  
Below: *The Sega CD*.



grounds, movie-like animation and better special effects, such as high-speed zooming and scaling).

CD gaming will also open the door to what I like to call "authentic sound." No longer will audio and music be limited to the hardware sound capabilities of a game system, but, instead, you will have sound and music that is just as good, if not better, than a musical CD that you buy for your stereo.

The bottom line behind CD-ROM gaming is massive capacity for a fraction of the cost. Game companies will no longer have to rely on computer chips that are not only more expensive and have less storage capacity, but are also bulky, awkward and harder to package.

Hey! Does that mean games are going to be *cheaper* to buy? C'mon, who are you kidding?! We live in a capitalistic society. That means game companies are going to make more money. Well, O.K., maybe we might see slightly cheaper games down the road, once CD games become standard and their production costs drop.

So what's the drawback? Anybody remember how much fun it was waiting for your Commodore 64, Apple II or Atari 400/800 to load a game like *Karateka*? Eeek! *Are wa warui*



Originally by *Brøderbund*, *Prince of Persia* will be introduced by *JVC* for the *Sega CD* this fall.



*desu!* (No, I didn't have a dyslexia attack—that's Japanese for "that's awful.") Yes, there are disc access times involved when playing CD-ROM games, just like floppy-based games. Nowhere near as long as they were in "ye old 8-bit computing days," but nonetheless, they do exist.

It's plain and simple folks—the advantages of CD gaming far outweigh the disadvantages for both the gamer and developer.

## SEGA'S DREAM MACHINE

Already available in Japan, the Sega CD system for the Genesis will hopefully hit the shelves in this country sometime in November. Sega plans on selling the system for a suggested retail price of \$299. Along with the CD-ROM drive unit, a special software pack-in called *Classic Collector's Edition*, worth \$300, will be included. The *Classic Collector's Edition* is a disc that contains some of the older Genesis games: *Columns*, *Golden Axe*, *Revenge of Shinobi*, *Streets of Rage* and *Super Monaco GP*. ICOM Simulations' *Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective*, which allows players to interact with the



Above: *Lunar the Silver Star*, by *Game Arts*, is a Japanese RPG already available there.  
Right: The *JVC Wondermega* will have *MIDI* capabilities.



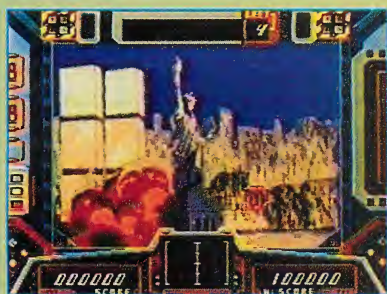
characters in the game, will also be bundled in with the system, along with two CD+G sampler music discs.

### HEART OF THE MACHINE

Like its sibling, the new Sega CD system will have a Motorola-based 68000 CPU under its hood. The most discernible difference between the two CPUs is the speed at which they process instructions. The Genesis has a 7.67 MHz 68000, while the Sega CD has a 12.5 MHz CPU. The combination of these two CPUs working in synchronization will allow for parallel processing of game code, creating some very fast and smooth graphics animation and play action.

### LET THERE BE SOFTWARE

Between Sega and its third-party licensees about 10-14 software titles are planned for simultaneous release with the system. At the Summer



Left and middle: *After Burner III* has not been scheduled for CD release in the U.S. Bottom: *Presence* is an adventure game due out around December in Japan.



Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago, Sega had originally announced that 20 titles would be available, but given normal delays and other unforeseen obstacles, that's still considerably more games than what other systems have had at their introduction. Twenty-plus titles are scheduled to be available by spring of '93.

### WONDERMEGA MANIA

If you don't have a Genesis and you would like to get involved in Sega CD gaming, you might want to opt for a JVC Wondermega. The Wondermega is a combo Genesis and Sega CD with some extra features in a sleek-looking single unit. Besides your standard video and audio outputs, the Wondermega has two microphone inputs. Apparently JVC/Victor Musical Industries will assume all marketing and sales responsibilities for the Wondermega.



Far left: Known as *Thunder Storm FX* in Japan, the game will be released by Renovation Products in this country as *Cobra Command*. Below: JVC's Wondermega (combo Genesis and Sega CD).



by Mike Davila



Left: The Mega CD (Japanese version of the Sega CD) intro screen and menu select.

Below left: *Rise of the Dragon*.

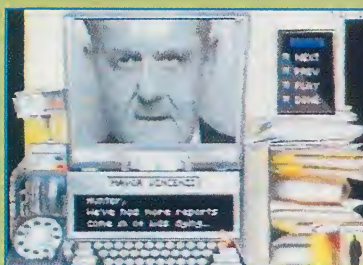
### WHAT SOFTWARE SHOULD WE EXPECT?

Game companies that at one time catered only to computer users have crossed the line into video games now that these systems are closer to their big-brother computer counterparts. Old-time computer favorites such as *Leisure Suit Larry* will make their way to the Genesis. Here is what some of the third-party licensees have to offer.

### BIGNET

Currently working on two titles for the Sega CD, *Black Hole Assault* is the nearest to completion. An action fighting game where Cybernetic Anthropomorphic Machines battle it out across the solar system, this game

Right: Bignet's *Black Hole Assault* is the sequel to *Heavy Nova*.



Left and below: *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* will be packaged with the Sega CD.

is actually a sequel to *Heavy Nova* that takes place a few years after that conflict, so don't be surprised if this game looks like you've seen it before. *Black Hole Assault* is expected to retail for around \$49.90.

### JVC

JVC has a pretty impressive lineup on its way, including two *Dungeon Master* titles, *Skull Keep* and *True Identity*.

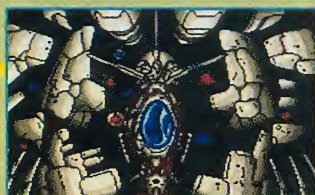
*Wonder Dog* is an action game with eight levels and 400 enemies. *Wonder Dog* should be out about the same time as the Sega CD.

*Prince of Persia* has appeared on just



state-of-the-art LX-3 fighter helicopter. *Cobra Command* uses near full-motion video and has 25 minutes of animation at six to eight frames per second. Due out in November, *Cobra Command* will retail for \$49.99.

Above left: *Out of this World*.  
Left: *Batman Returns*.



about every game system created and remains true to its classic status in the Sega CD format. New custom cinematic-style sequences have been added to spruce up the game.

### RENOVATION PRODUCTS

*Cobra Command* is one of the most exciting CD titles that will debut about the same time the system becomes available. A large group of terrorists has established strongholds at many of the world's historical landmarks, and your mission is to take them out using a

Top: JVC's *Wolf Child*.  
Middle: Sega's *Dark Wizard*.  
Bottom: *Sol-Face* will not be released in CD format in the U.S.

### SEGA CD SPECIFICATIONS

**CPU**  
MC-68000 (12.5 MHz)

### MEMORY

#### RAM

- 6 megabits (For programming, video and audio data.)
- 512 kilobits (PCM ROM data cache)
- 128 kilobits (CD-ROM data cache)
- 64 kilobits (Backup storage)

#### BIOS (Boot ROM)

- 1 megabit (CD Game BIOS, CD Player Software, CD+G Software)

#### CD-ROM

- 500 megabytes of disc capacity

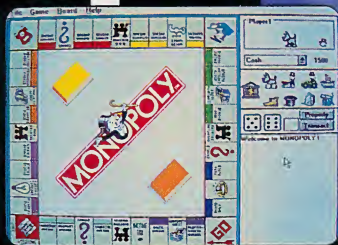
### AUDIO

- 8 Channel Digital Stereo, with a maximum sampling frequency of 32 KHz
- 8X oversampling, with digital filter(D/A) and fade-in, fade-out capabilities.



# Trade Up!

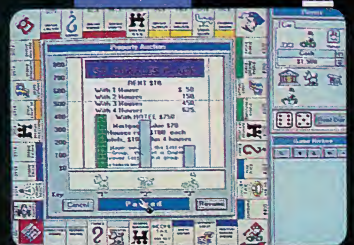
## The Game You Grew Up With Has Grown Up Too!



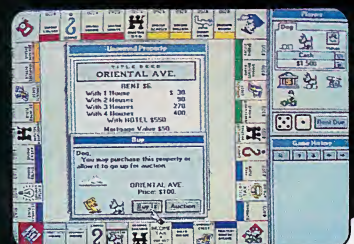
WINDOWS™ version



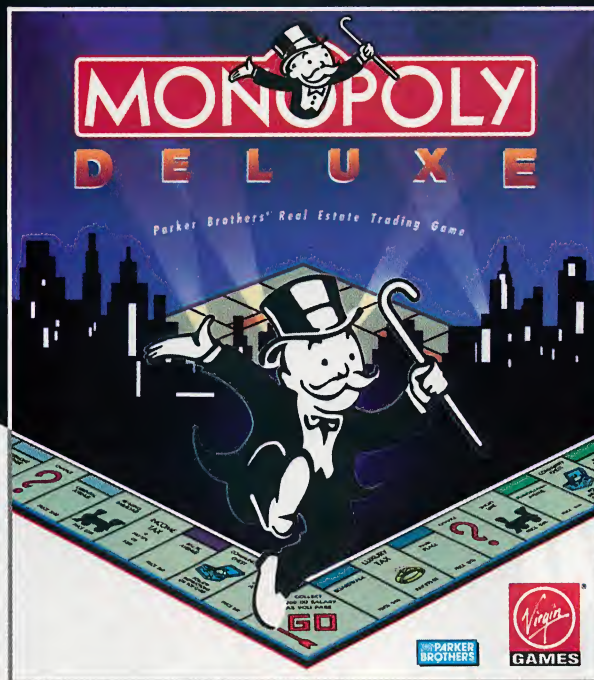
WINDOWS™ version



IBM PC version



IBM PC version



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## SIERRA ON-LINE

Probably the most aggressive Sega CD licensee of any, Sierra has decided to enter the CD video-game market at full throttle, and is currently converting many of its popu-

lar computer titles to Sega CD format. Tentatively due out in November are *The Adventures of Willy Beamish*, *King's Quest V* and possibly *Mixed-Up Mother Goose*. Sierra has indicated that all of its CD games will use digitized voices in place of text for character speech,

and that all games will have at least 100 megabytes of voice tracks.

As you can see, it looks like the Sega CD will have a full lineup of games to start off with. Let's just hope that the quality of the titles is as good as the system that they're designed for. 



Left:  
*Leisure Suit Larry I*.  
Below: *The Adventures of Willy Beamish*.



## JAPANESE SEGA CD LINEUP

### GAME TITLE

- 3x3 Eyes
- Afterburner III
- Ambition of the Samurai Lord
- Black Hole Assault
- Electric Ninja Alesta
- Merry-Go-Round
- Nobunga and His Ninja Force
- Pop 'N Land
- Presence
- Prince of Persia
- Sol-Feace
- Switch
- Tale of the Alsan War
- Teraforming
- The Third World War
- The Bewitched Girl: Silkylip
- Thunder Storm FX
- Wonder Dog
- Yumi Mix

### COMPANY

Sega  
CSK  
SIMS  
Micronet  
Compile  
Data West  
Compile  
Sur de Wave  
Sur de Wave  
JVC  
Wolfteam  
Sega  
Human  
Pack-In-Video  
Micronet  
Riot  
Wolfteam  
JVC  
Game Arts

### RELEASE DATE

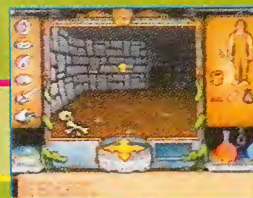
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10/92  
12/92  
Available  
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9/92  
9/92  
12/92  
Available  
Available  
Available  
9/92

**NOTE:** All projected release dates are for Japanese versions only.

# The Legend Continues...



Right: JVC's *Dungeon Master*.



### U.S. SEGA CD LINEUP

| <u>GAME TITLE</u>                      | <u>COMPANY</u> | <u>RELEASE DATE</u> | <u>GAME TITLE</u>                        | <u>COMPANY</u> | <u>RELEASE DATE</u> |
|--|----------------|---------------------|--|----------------|---------------------|
| • <i>Arcade Collector Edition</i>      | Sega           | 11/92               | • <i>RBI 4</i>                           | Tengen         | 3/93                |
| • <i>Batman Returns</i>                | Sega           | 11/92               | • <i>Rise of the Dragon</i>              | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Black Hole Assault</i>            | Bignet         | 11/92               | • <i>Role-Playing Collector Edition</i>  | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Chakan: The Forever Man</i>       | Sega           | '93                 | • <i>Sewer Shark</i>                     | Sony Imagesoft | 12/92               |
| • <i>Channel X</i>                     | Sega           | '93                 | • <i>Shadow of the Beast</i>             | JVC            | 3/93                |
| • <i>Chuck Rock</i>                    | Sony Imagesoft | '93                 | • <i>Sherlock Holmes:</i>                |                |                     |
| • <i>Classics Collector Edition</i>    | Sega           | 11/92               | <i>Consulting Detective</i>              | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Cobra Command</i>                 | Renovation     | 11/92               | • <i>Shooter Collector Edition</i>       | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Dark Wizard</i>                   | Sega           | 11/92               | • <i>Sonic the Hedgehog 2</i>            | Sega           | '93                 |
| • <i>Dungeon Master: Skull Keep</i>    | JVC            | 12/92               | • <i>Space Quest IV</i>                  | Sierra         | 12/92               |
| • <i>Dungeon Master: True Identity</i> | JVC            | 3/93                | • <i>Sports Collector Edition</i>        | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Final Fight</i>                   | Sega           | 11/92               | • <i>Star Trek: The Next Generation</i>  | Sega           | '93                 |
| • <i>Hammer</i>                        | Sega           | '93                 | • <i>Stellar 7</i>                       | Sierra         | 11/92               |
| • <i>High School Hell</i>              | Sega           | '93                 | • <i>Super Star Wars</i>                 | JVC/Lucasfilm  | 2/93                |
| • <i>Hook</i>                          | Sony Imagesoft | '93                 | • <i>Switch</i>                          | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Joe Montana Football</i>          | Sega           | 11/92               | • <i>Terminator</i>                      | Virgin         | 12/92               |
| • <i>King's Quest V</i>                | Sierra         | 11/92               | • <i>The Secret of Monkey Island</i>     | JVC/Lucasfilm  | 2/92                |
| • <i>Leisure Suit Larry</i>            | Sierra         | 3/93                | • <i>The Adventures of Willy Beamish</i> | Sierra         | 9/92                |
| • <i>Looney Tunes</i>                  | Sega           | '93                 | • <i>Terminator 2: The Arcade Game</i>   | Flying Edge    | 1/93                |
| • <i>Mixed-Up Mother Goose</i>         | Sierra         | 9/92                | • <i>Ultima Underworld</i>               | Sega           | 11/92               |
| • <i>Night Trap</i>                    | Sega           | 11/92               | • <i>Wing Commander</i>                  | Sega           | '93                 |
| • <i>Out of This World</i>             | Virgin         | 12/92               | • <i>Wolf Child</i>                      | JVC            | 12/92               |
| • <i>Pit-Fighter 2</i>                 | Tengen         | 3/93                | • <i>Wonder Dog</i>                      | JVC            | 9/92                |
| • <i>Police Quest III</i>              | Sierra         | 12/92               | • <i>WWF Wrestling</i>                   | Flying Edge    | 1/93                |
| • <i>Prince of Persia</i>              | JVC            | 9/92                | • <i>Young Indiana Jones</i>             | JVC/Lucasfilm  | 1/93                |



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# VIDEO

# GAMES REVIEWS

## Soulblazer

ENIX AMERICA

For the Super NES (N/A)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

"Action role-playing game": In Japan, it refers to dozens of role-playing games where the player must do his own fighting to gain experience and items necessary to complete the quest. In the more limited American cartridge market, "action role-playing game" is a more charitable way of saying "Zelda clone," which is what *Soulblazer* appears to be on first inspection. From the overhead 3-D perspective to the elflike figure, *Soulblazer* could be one of dozens of games—that is, without reading any of the dialogue boxes. For it is in the story that *Soulblazer* sets itself far apart from the competition. *Soulblazer's* story has meaning, as well as the pariah of the kill-and-conquer cartridge consciousness/maturity.

The hero begins the game on a planet totally devoid of normal life. There are no plants, no people and no animals. Summoned by the greedy King Magridd, who received one gold coin for every soul he delivered, Deathtoll replaced all life with "monster lairs" (reminiscent of Enix's *Act*

*Raiser*), each of which churns out a requisite number of beasts for the player to kill before it is disabled. Conquered lairs then open passages, generate other monster lairs, reveal treasure chests or, most importantly, free souls. Each of the six worlds is thus slowly repopulated before the player must defeat the boss monster and move on to the next stage.

Once released, souls—be they in plant, animal or human form—present the hero with information, items or a request for items. Not all of the speeches are of the "you need the gold key in the silver lock" variety. Often, the freed souls speak of their former and current lives and what they think about their reincarnation. They also tell jokes on several occasions, and anyone who is not amused by the exercising chest of drawers has been playing too much *Splatterhouse*.

Admittedly, the philosophy is a wonderful touch, but *Soul-*

*blazer* is still an action game. As the game progresses, the hero has an increasing number of swords, armor and spells to choose from. Some are essential, like the bubble armor, which is needed in the underwater adventure, and the lucky sword, which simply increases the amount of treasure creatures leave behind



|   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| Weapon  | Armor | Magic |
|   |       |       |
| ▶Wep.: The Soul Blade<br>Arm.: Soul Armor<br>Mag.: Phoenix<br>Item: Shield Bracelet |       |       |

upon their demise. Swords may either be swung for full effect or, when that is not the wisest choice (though I never found that to be the case), thrust for less damage. To cast magic spells, the player must have magic gems that are released every time a creature dies. The hero apparently has some sort of mystical telekinesis, because he can summon gems that are out of his reach. This comes especially in handy whenever the opponent was fighting on a higher level, behind a wall or on a dangerous floor made of

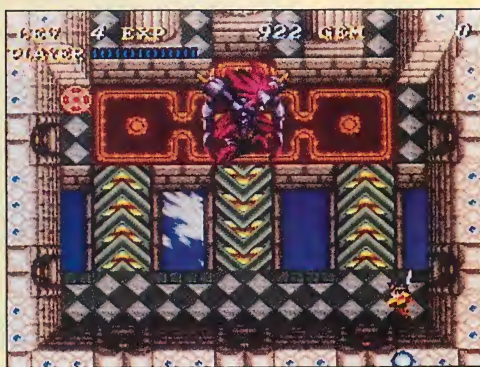
lava, spikes or spears. Spells are cast through a white "soul" sphere that continually circles the hero, to aid in the aiming of spells like flame ball and magic flare. The souls have other uses: Some illuminate dark

worlds, as well as a place to save the game. These teleporters help curtail the endless wandering that often plagues RPGs. The worlds—in the order encountered: Grass Valley, Greenwood, St. Elles (a mermaid town), Home of the Mountain Spirit and Magridd—have sufficiently differing dangers, rewards and quests to hinder players from realizing that they are doing essentially the same thing throughout the video game.

Nothing compares visually to the "final" newly discovered World of Evil, which epitomizes *Soulblazer's* only real flaw. It's understood that the early stages of any game should be simple, but why did Enix hold back so much? The graphics, animated story line sequences, character personalities and politics don't come together at all until St. Elles (World 3). Some may think this gradual enhancement makes every discovery that much more impressive and involving, but it also suggests some lazy programming. And anyone who doesn't spend several hours every day mastering their eye-hand coordination will be pleased to discover that, outside of the first boss monster, the game is never unfairly difficult.

*Soulblazer* is not an industry landmark in any of its aspects, but it is still so much more than the standard, pointless monster-genocide game that role-playing fans should consider buying a copy.

—David S. Moskowitz



caverns, while others reveal invisible objects using localized screen distortion that highlights the subtle but impressive visuals and graphics.

Each of the six worlds contains its own set of puzzles and quests that must be completed before meeting the end boss. However, it is not necessary to eliminate every monster generator, and sometimes it's impossible, given the player's current armaments. The mystical Master's shrines serve as convenient teleporters between and within available

Enix America  
2679 151st Place NE  
Redmond, WA 98052  
(206) 885-9611

## EDITORS' CORNER

|    |                      |
|----|----------------------|
| AE | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| CB | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| DM | (see review)         |
| MD | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

Everyone agreed that *Soulblazer* was a neat mix of RPG and arcade action, but the constant, unchanging music was a little too much for Mike.

# Shapeshifter

TTI

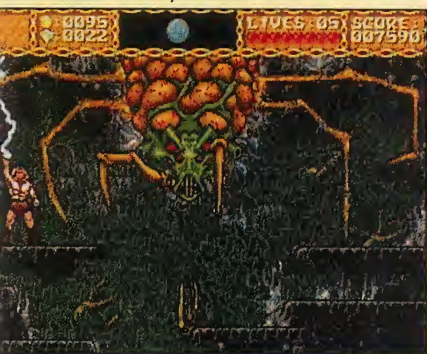
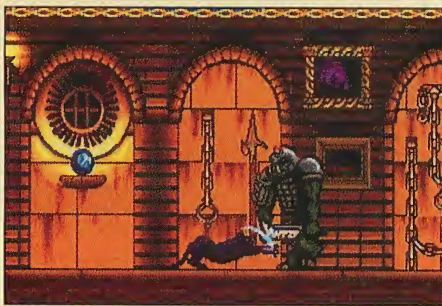
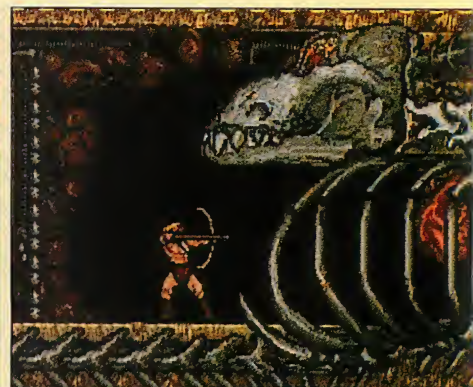
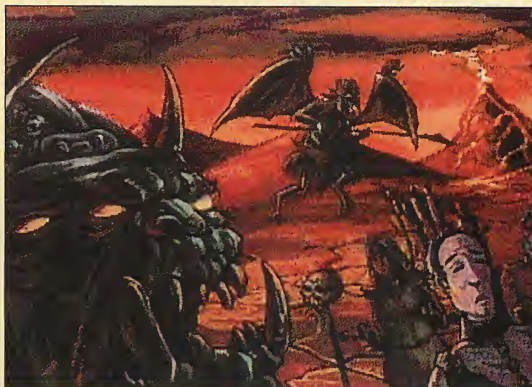
For the TurboGrafx-16/  
TurboDuo (\$49.95)

TG-16 owners: TurboGrafx-CD with Super  
System Card required.

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|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The five local wizards known as the Ring of Five were the protectors of the land of Krellion and the creators of the rivers of life. When the wizards were in control, life was good. But now the rivers have turned black and the wizards are unable to watch over their creations, having been captured by evil creatures from the Shadow Realm. These creatures, called the Dark Ones, are preparing to take over Krellion, and only the hero Lykos can defeat them.

In *Shapeshifter*, a new CD-ROM game for the TurboGrafx-16/TurboDuo, you play Lykos, as he hacks and slashes his way through a magical fantasyland filled with horrible creatures and deadly danger. Your goal is to locate and release the five captured wizards and defeat the Dark Ones. But, before you reach the end of your



quest, you must also master the astounding shapeshifting abilities that the wizards will award to you. Only in these powerful new guises—black panther, psionic shark, rock troll and gold dragon—can you hope to defeat all your enemies.

As you may have guessed, *Shapeshifter* is mainly a hack-and-slash game that requires speed on the control pad and clever fighting to boot. Whenever you leave the safety of a town, you'll be swamped with vicious enemies, all striving to halt your quest as quickly as possible, as per their orders from the Dark Ones. As always, if you're to survive, you must learn each creature's weak

points and attack style and take advantage of that vital knowledge to wipe him out.

The creatures you'll face include spiders, bees, worms and a whole bevy of nameless abominations, all of which are graphically detailed and well animated. Many of the enemies are oversized, providing a visual treat as well as dangerous combatants. In fact, some boss creatures take up fully half the screen, although the entire creature isn't always animated.

As is typical in this type of sword-fest, defeated enemies often leave behind special items that help you on your way. These include gold, which is used to buy equipment and services;

gems, which power your shapeshifting abilities; potions, which provide healing powers; and various power-ups that enhance your weapons or your shapeshifter forms. In addition, helpful items can be purchased in town, including armor, weapons, fortune telling and healing.

As it is a CD game, *Shapeshifter* is packed with digitized voices and sound effects. When you speak to a character in the game, you don't have to read long-winded, on-screen messages; rather, digitized voices carry on both the character's and your side of the conversation, saving your eyes from the infamous video-game blur. To add to the game's audio spice, the voices were recorded by professional actors, who employed lots of expression and drama.

The bottom line: While *Shapeshifter* is a fairly ordinary hack-and-slash contest, its well-crafted graphics and digitized voices boost it a few notches above the competition. In other words, you'll keep playing just to see what comes next. And, while the game isn't awesome enough to double as an excuse to buy a CD player, if you already have CD capabilities, you'll probably want to add *Shapeshifter* to your library.

—Clayton Walnum

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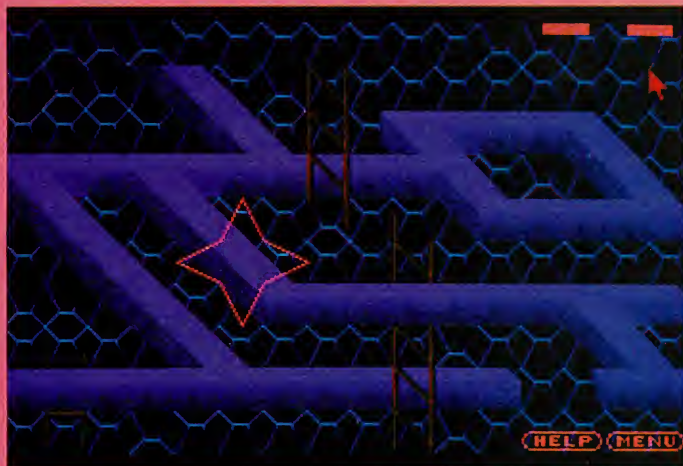
*continued on page 56*

## EDITORS' CORNER

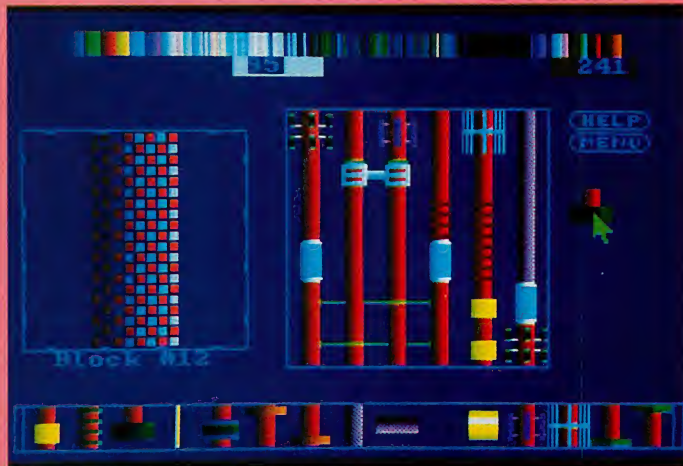
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| CB | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Opinions were split: Chris and Andy decided that it was an attractive game, while Dave and Mike thought the game play took too long to get started.

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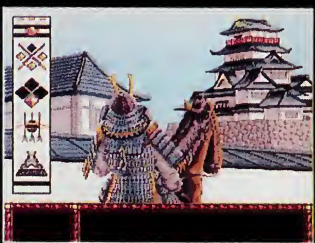
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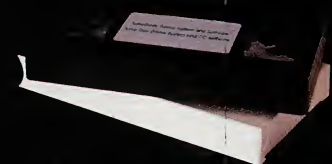
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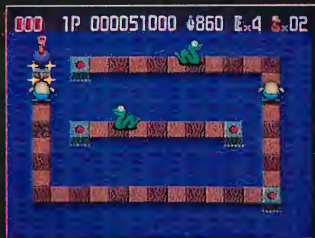
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## SPLASH LAKE



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continued from page 52

# Team USA Basketball

ELECTRONIC ARTS

For the Sega Genesis (\$54.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

By now you must be thinking to yourself, "Just what the heck is Electronic Arts up to?" This is, after all, the third basketball game that the company has released for the Genesis in less than half a year!

In case you haven't read the newspaper sports sections for the past few months, the summer of 1992 marked the first time the U.S. sent professional basketball players to participate in the Olympic Games, an honor that had traditionally been reserved for amateurs and college players. The USA basketball team that blew Barcelona wide open was arguably the finest squad ever assembled in the history of the sport. What better way for EA to commemorate the team's achievements than to bring out another Genesis game?

All kidding aside, *Team USA Basketball* actually does a pretty good job of distinguishing itself from its predecessors. Aside from the obvious differences in the real-life games (international rules allow such luxuries as a 30-second shot clock and a three-point line that's closer to the net), the pre- and postgame commentary of real-life sportscaster Ron Barr adds plenty of Olympic flavor to the proceedings.

If these and other features aren't enough to convince Genesis owners that the game is special, EA has hit on a clever idea that just might spark an industry trend. According to the press hype, *Team USA Basketball* will only be offered for sale through December 31, 1992. Though it won't be the first Genesis title to be yanked off the shelves after only a few months of availability—have you looked for a copy of Sega's *Fantasia* lately?—the idea of video games as collectibles is certainly an interesting one. You have to admit that a game cartridge would

give you much more enjoyment than, say, a basketball card with Chris Mullin's picture on it. (I've used this as an example because the value of Mullin's 1986-87 Fleer rookie card is roughly equivalent to the suggested retail price of EA's *Team USA Basketball* game. Think about that for a minute.)

Graphically, the main action screen makes it very easy to tell the players apart, even without a scorecard. You may recognize the physical characteristics of Yugoslavia's Vlade Divac or Croatia's Toni Kukoc even before you hear that their likenesses have been included in the game. Of course, the focus on marquee names like Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson is what's really going to sell this one, so it's good to see that there's a solid game behind the



| UNITED STATES OF AMERICA |      | HBA  |       |
|--------------------------|------|------|-------|
| PLAYER STATISTICS        |      |      |       |
| PLAYER                   | POS. | PTS. | FTGS. |
| BIRD                     | F    | 7    | 6     |
| BARKLEY                  | F    | 14   | 6     |
| ROBINSON                 | F    | 5    | 7     |
| JOHNSON                  | G    | 15   | 6     |
| JORDAN                   | G    | 9    | 6     |
| MALONE                   | F    | 11   | 6     |
| DREXLER                  | F    | 10   | 6     |
| LAETTLER                 | F    | 4    | 6     |
| MULLIN                   | F    | 13   | 6     |
| PIPPER                   | F    | 8    | 7     |
| EMING                    | F    | 6    | 7     |
| STOCKTON                 | G    | 12   | 6     |

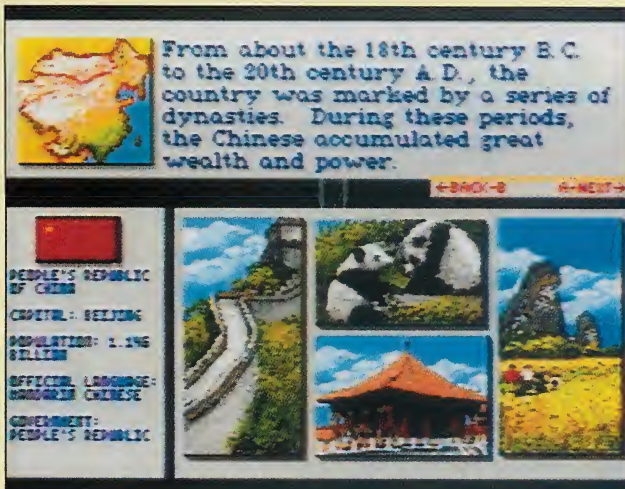
SCORE 14 TIME 20:00 TIME OUTS 2  
 B MORE STAT A SUB PLAYER  
 C SWAP TEAM START GO TO GAME

idea. In some ways it's even more exciting than the real thing—at least when you play against the computer or another player, there are bound to be a few close contests!

As for me, I can't afford to spend any more time trying to figure out EA's marketing strategy (or lack thereof). It's doing good stuff, and that's all that counts, as any owner of *John Madden Football* or *NHL Hockey* can attest. I say it's time to stop beating around the bush and put together the definitive Genesis baseball game.

—Chris Bieniek

Electronic Arts  
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 (415) 572-ARTS



### EDITORS' CORNER

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| AE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

*Team USA Basketball* doesn't blow away the competition as much as the "real" team did in Barcelona. Andy felt it was too slow.

# NEW

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CIRCLE #123 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# Super Bowling

AMERICAN TECHNOS

For the Super NES (\$59.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

No doubt you readers get tired of us reviewers harping on the lack of original game concepts. And maybe it's true that 50% of the games on the market are constructed out of 2% of the ideas. But games occasionally come along that make me do a double take. First take: a silly idea. Second take: maybe not such a silly idea after all. Such is the case with those mondo-bizarro fishing cartridges, and such is the case with American Technos' *Super Bowling*.

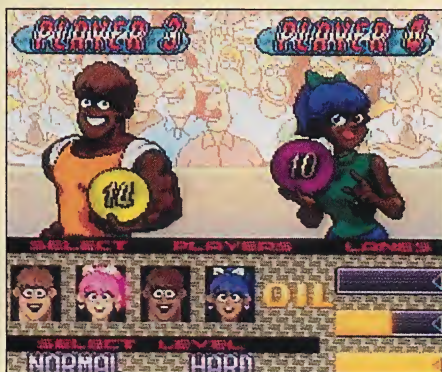
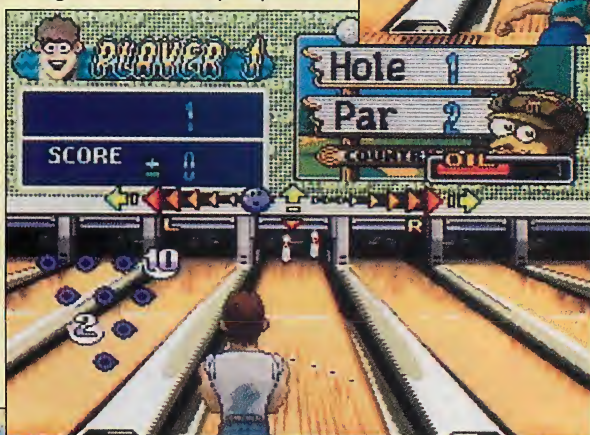
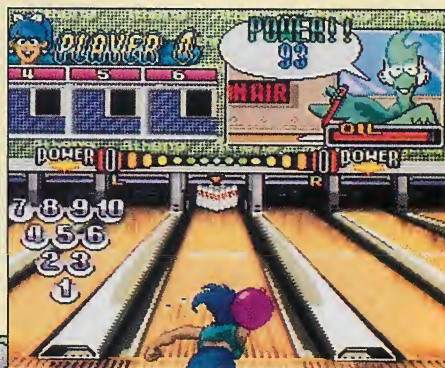
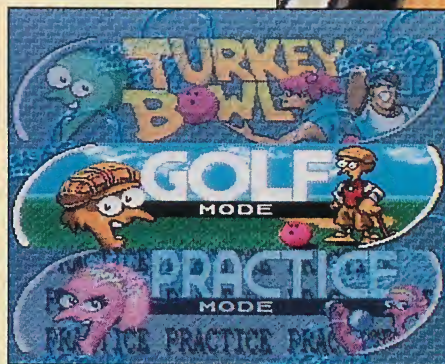
It shouldn't be such a surprise. Nearly every arcade has *some* ancient bowling game tucked away in a corner. *Super Bowling* is the first SNES bowling cartridge, and it's slick, arcade-quality and surprisingly up-tempo for what, in real life, is a slow, modest "sport."

There are three modes available: turkey bowling, golf bowling and a practice mode. Turkey bowling (so named for the three-strikes-in-a-row "turkey") is what most of us know as plain ol' bowling. Golf bowling is a peculiar arrangement where the pins are set up in unusual formations and you play nine "holes" (frames), each with its own "par" and scored according to golf rules. Practice mode allows you to set up the pins in any formation you wish and rehearse your technique.

Technique is a matter of balancing four variables:

your starting position relative to the alley, the spot you're aiming at, the English you put on the ball and the power you put behind your roll. The first two are easily enough determined, set at your leisure before the roll; the latter two are determined by how precisely you hit a button as gauges bounce quickly back and forth, like the gauges you find in most golf simulations. In fact, change the graphics around a bit and you *would* be playing a golf simulation.

There are a number of other factors that come into play: the weight of your chosen ball, how much of the alley has been "oiled," the difficulty setting and the characteristics of your on-screen character. There are four characters to choose from, of both sexes and two races, and each character has unique strengths and weaknesses. Four people can



play at once, with any combination of the characters.

The "Japanimation" characters are the source of one of my few gripes. Only the lower half of the screen displays the ball as it rolls toward the pins; the other half is virtually wasted showing your character's reactions as the ball hurtles toward the pins. I'd like to have seen more of the action and less of the cute characters.

Otherwise, the graphics are impressive: big, bold, crisp and colorful. The

sounds are ordinary, except for the sound of the ball striking the pins, which is very realistic. There are lots of nice little touches, such as constant commentary and a touch of sarcasm whenever you fail to break 200. All in all, a good once-in-awhile rental for some of us, and a worthwhile investment for real fans of the sport.

—Josh Mandel

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## EDITORS' CORNER

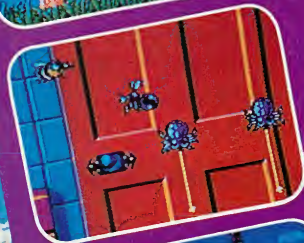
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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

This Super NES entry lacks some of the excitement needed to call it "Super," and isn't what you expect if you're looking for traditional bowling.

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# Goal! Two

JALECO

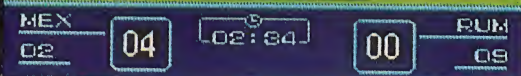
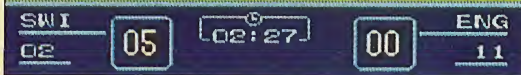
For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.99)

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| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

I cannot tell a lie...I'm a soccer junkie. I fanatically followed the results of the last World Cup in 1990. I got warm and tingly inside when I learned that the United States would be hosting the upcoming 1994 World Cup. (Okay, maybe I didn't get warm and tingly, but I was darn happy.) And, of course, I scarf up every video-game version of soccer I can get my paws on. I'm happy to say that my latest discovery, *Goal! Two*, is the best soccer game I have ever played on the NES.

*Goal! Two* is loaded with player-friendly options. You can set automatic or manual goalie control, which allows you to stick the NES with the harrowing job of goalkeeping. You can set the length of each match from

two to 90(!) minutes. You can enable or disable the infamous offside rule, which prevents too many players from entering the opposing team's goal area at once. You can enable or disable fouls. You even get a choice of two control methods, one of



which is specially tailored to this particular game's unique graphic presentation (description follows).

*Goal! Two* is programmed with 24 different national teams and four modes of play: Super Cup (a World Cup-type tournament), 1P vs. Com (one player against the NES), 2P vs. Com (two players against the NES) and 1P vs. 2P (two players against each other).

Before the start of each match, you choose one of four formations to be used by your team. The formations range from the defense-oriented 4-4-2 (with eight defenders) to the offense-oriented "sweeper" (with six attackers). Once you've chosen a formation, the match begins.

During the match, you can coax a variety of maneuvers from your players: headers, bicycle kicks, slides, body stops and more. You can even put a slight amount of spin on



the ball after you kick it, which allows you to curl long kicks toward the goal (and hopefully into the goal). Being able to curl your kicks is no big deal, but it's a good example of the attention to detail that makes *Goal! Two* so much fun to play.

*Goal! Two's* graphics are the most unique aspect of the game. The playing field is viewed at a tilted isometric angle that I've never seen in a soccer game before. The game scores points for this keen viewpoint alone.

Keen viewpoint aside, the graphics are simplistically drawn, and there is some nasty sprite flicker when too many

players appear on the screen at once. The sound effects and music are both average, as is usually the case with sports games.

The verdict: *Goal! Two* shoots and scores. It's a near-perfect mixture of action and strategy that will leave both casual game players and soccer junkies satisfied. Here's hoping that Jaleco carries over this superb soccer series to the Super NES, so 16-bit players can get in on the fun.

—Zach Meston

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## EDITORS' CORNER

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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| AE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Dave brought up the point that the NES is still a worthwhile game console, and all editors concurred that *Goal! Two* is a good example of that.

# D&D: Warriors of the Eternal Sun

SEGA

For the Sega Genesis (\$69.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

With their variety of situations and rule complexities Dungeons & Dragons simulators have always worked best on personal computers. With its four button controllers (A,B,C, START), the Genesis always seemed a poor candidate for smooth translation. But by working within many of the system's limitations and stretching the boundaries of others, Sega has produced a role-playing game better than many whose rules were devised for the purpose of electronic play.

Rather than anchor itself to one of the established D&D worlds used as settings for existing software, Sega created a town and magically transported it to a brand-new world with no connections to any old ones—supposedly. Players create four-member parties, which limits successful expedition to minor variations of fighter-cleric-mage-thief. All start out as first level in the now-lost castle. With no trade, merchants have few weapons, armor or supplies. Nearly uncontrollable panic is about to overcome the populous, while Duke Hector Barrik is so morose that players will be happy to risk the wilderness' monsters simply to get away from him. In fact, *Warriors* boasts perhaps the most discomforting sequence for player failure in all of gaming: Dis-

heartened by the party's defeat, the castle inhabitants turn on themselves in panic, eliminating all traces of their culture, along with their own lives.

All town and wilderness play is seen from a 3-D overhead perspective, with one character controlled by the player while the other three follow. Unlike far too many games using this view, the rear characters know to walk around objects and not get stuck every five spaces.

Outdoor combat involves the four characters acting and moving independently to best attack or avoid opponents. They don't move awkwardly from invisible hex to hex; remaining movement allowance is recalculated with each almost invisibly small step.

Inside travel is from a 3-D first-person perspective, with its predictable tactical movement limitations. Compared to outside travel, the graphics screen for dungeon/tower/cave exploration is tiny, but that probably contributes to its lightning speed, which makes indoor travel far preferable to outside treks. The first-person segments also have auto-mapping, which, unfortunately, is plagued

with a limited memory. The game only remembers the map of the specific dungeon area as long as the player is continually exploring it.

To avoid nonstop menus for repeated actions, players assign the two most common weapons/skills/spells to the A and B buttons.

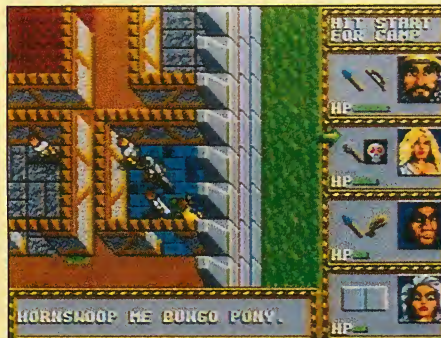
However, players do not need to have weapons and spells ready to use in that particular combat round. All items, skills and spells have their own graphic icon, making it possible to display large quantities of information without cluttering up the screen.

*Warriors'* only serious flaw lies in its experience system. Characters are awarded points only if they participate in a kill. While this adds realism to the game, it also means that the party must constantly rest, and the frontline characters must risk unnecessary damage to ensure the spell casters get sufficient experience needed to attain the magical firepower crucial to survival in fantasy role-playing games. Also, like 95% of the genre, the emphasis here is on combat, not role playing.

Nevertheless, *D&D: Warriors of the Eternal Sun* is Sega's long-needed salvo in the battle for 16-bit role-players. Now, if Dungeons & Dragons could be done so easily on a simple controller, why isn't anyone interested in doing *Tunnels & Trolls*, *Runequest* or *Traveller*?

—David S. Moskowitz

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Redwood City, CA 94065  
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## EDITORS' COMMENTS

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Sega has created a good D&D RPG for the Genesis. Mike felt it was solid; Andy saw durability; and Chris pegged it as ambitious.

# Order of the Griffon

TII

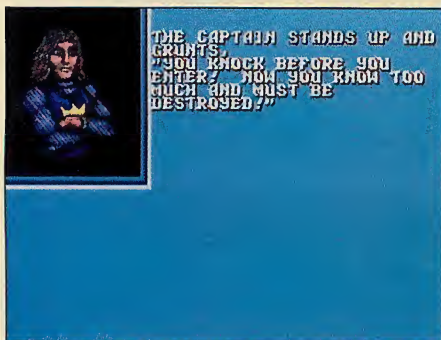
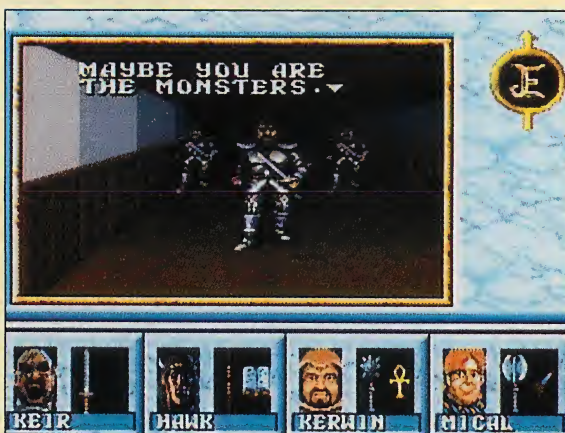
For the TurboGrafx-16 (\$49.95)

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| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

(As this issue went to production, we were provided with a version of Order of the Griffon that was nearly complete, except for some of the images in the first-person perspective sequences.)

Order of the Griffon is the first TurboGrafx-16 RPG based upon the Dungeons & Dragons games. The situation involves a vampire who has amassed bands of monsters to wreak terror on the people and take over the land. That's the rumor, though. Your Lord Korrigan has his doubts about these "superstitions," as he calls them. He commissions a party to find the truths to these stories.

You put together adventurers from seven types of



character classes (fighter, cleric, thief, etc.) and three different personalities from each of these. In all, there are 21 people to choose from to fill the four positions available for the journey.

Once you're briefed by Lord Korrigan, you begin in the corridors of the castle Radlebb Keep. Doors entered

may reveal clues and important information waiting in the rooms behind them—or zombies, goblins, rats and any other sort of creature that's eager for a kill.

Go outside the castle and your party will be walking through the surrounding town, where a tavern, weapons shop and holy place are found. Beyond Radlebb Keep are other castles and towns where you must go to explore.

Griffon incorporates the terminology used in D&D into its game play, but it's hard to figure how things like a character's intelligence, wisdom and charm affect, say, the fight scenes.

Somehow, they do, and the responses of people whom you speak to are affected by the makeup of your characters' statistics as well.

Fighting is common as soon as you leave the relative safety of a town and journey to another location. Bands of monsters seem to jump out at every step of the way. Getting killed is very easy, and it takes trial and error to find out which of your party members is most effective against certain monsters. But working to win these battles brings the reward of the fallen enemies' weapons and money, which you can always use for your party's own benefit.

Griffon has an easy-to-use inventory selection screen. You can effortlessly arm or disarm either of your characters' weapons or select spells. This simplicity of function, though complex still in content, is this RPG's strongest point and is handled very well without confusion.

There aren't that many locations in Order of the Griffon to explore, and most of the mysteries in the game's plot aren't so puzzling. So surviving the many fights you'll encounter is the key to this RPG. Otherwise, this is a basic sleuthing adventure trussed up in fantasy garb—an intermediate-level RPG.

—Howard H. Wen

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Here's one for serious RPG fans, like Dave—and he advises that it's just like "gold box" games, but too repetitive. Andy thought it was clunky.



# World Heroes

SNK

For the Neo-Geo (N/A)

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| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

If it's true that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then the folks at Capcom must be more flattered than a pancake by now. Its *Street Fighter II* is the most popular video game since *Pac-Man*, and the industry has clearly gone half insane in its frantic attempts to grind out *Street Fighter* clones by the dozens. *World Heroes* is the latest pretender to the *SFII* throne, and, while nobody really expects it to divert much attention away from Capcom's powerhouse, it has been warmly received in the arcades.

I'd guess that there are two main reasons why the game succeeds: First, it's a cleanly designed contest that takes advantage of the power of the Neo-Geo without any of the flickering or slowdowns that put a damper on some of SNK's more ambitious titles. Secondly, it is such an unbelievably blatant copy of *SFII* that a Capcom vs. SNK lawsuit wouldn't surprise me one bit. Honestly, this sucker should come in a box with a sticker that screams "I am a *Street Fighter II* clone!"

Of course, it's not the first Neo-Geo *SFII* clone—*Fatal Fury* even had a digitized voice that announced each round with the exclamation, "Fight!" But *World Heroes* goes wa-a-a-y beyond

that. There are eight characters to choose from, including one female and a pair of Japanese martial artists who share the same special moves. One guy even has the ability to attack with fists and feet that stretch across the screen like Plastic Man's would do. A map appears before each match to show each fighter's country of origin, and there are hordes of onlookers who cheer and gesture wildly in the background during each round. After each battle, close-ups of the characters appear, and the winner taunts his or her bloodied opponent. Does any of this sound familiar?

The tastiest bits of *World Heroes* appear when the game goes out on a

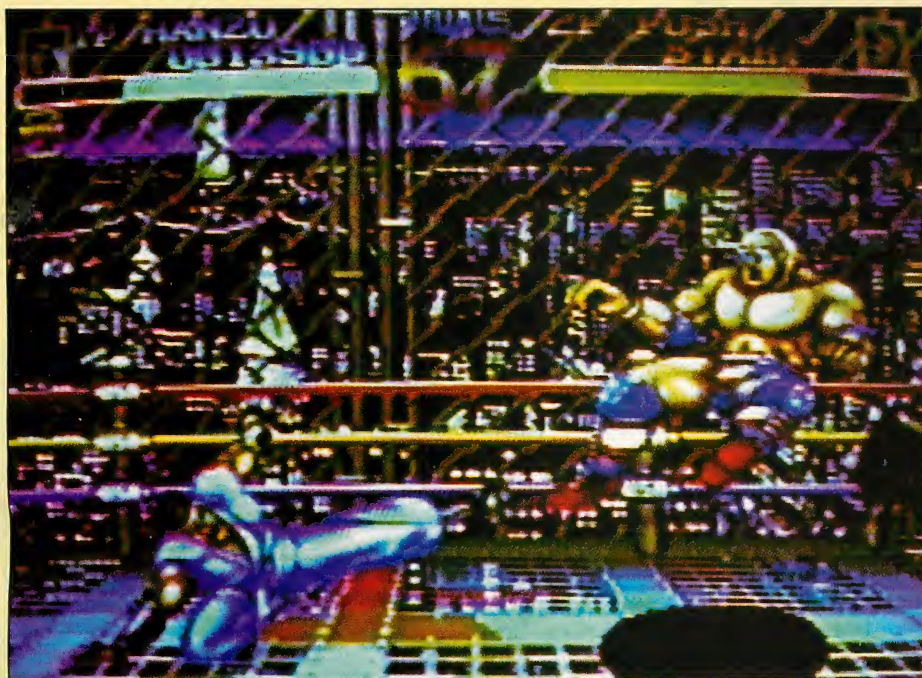


limb and strays from the *SFII* format. Janne, the female character, is perhaps the best example: She's the only fighter who carries a weapon (a sword), and her postgame remarks are particularly sarcastic. "Would you like to make any other comments about my place being in the kitchen?" she says to her male opponents after slicing them up and—in the Death Match option—stripping the hair from their heads. The Death Match is also interesting because the characters can be injured by their surroundings: spikes on the walls, flaming barriers, etc.

Let's pretend for the sake of argument that the *Street Fighter* series never existed. (Don't hyperventilate, we'll bring it back in a moment!) It's hard to estimate what the public reaction to *World Heroes* would have been in such an imperfect world, but I'd have to guess that the game would fare pretty well. If the genre didn't have a solid foundation, it wouldn't be so widely imitated. I should stress, too, that the graphics, sounds and game play of *World Heroes* are certainly strong enough to make a favorable impression, particularly when taken out of the context of the current craze. Heck, it really is a fun game. It's just a shame that it's so unoriginal.

—Chris Bieniek

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Torrance, CA 90503  
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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

*World Heroes* lends its existence to the success of *Street Fighter II*. Dave notes that it's the same price as an SNES and a *SFII* cart, but it's impressive all the same.

# Clue

PARKER BROTHERS  
For the Super NES (\$49.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

For those of you not familiar with the board game *Clue*, allow me to offer you a quick strategy guide:

If not A, then (B-F)

$$C + i = D + k$$

$$Z^2 - Y^2 = X^2$$

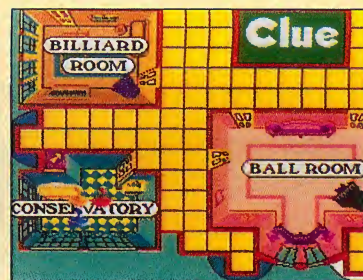
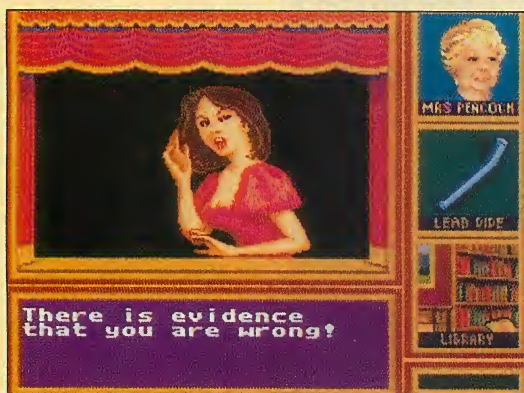
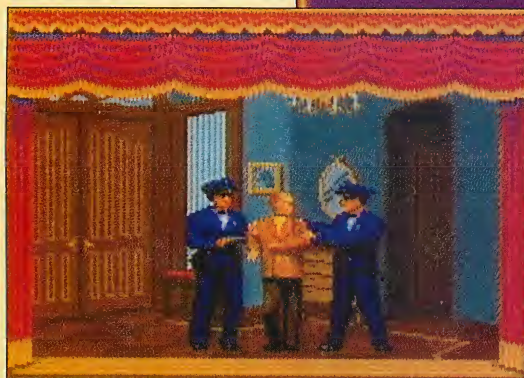
(Attention techno-dweebs: The above is meant to be a *joke*, okay? I haven't solved a polynomial equation since the ninth grade.)

The point is, behind its pseudo-Sherlock Holmes trappings, *Clue* is essentially a cut-and-dried exercise in logic: The object of the game is to determine which of six seedy characters (Professor Plum the archeologist, Miss Scarlett the gold digger, etc.) used which of six

handy weapons (a candlestick, a lead pipe, etc.) in which room of a stately mansion (the study, the conservatory, etc.) to dispatch the unfortunate (and ever-anonymous) Mr. Boddy. At the start of the game, each player is dealt a varying number of cards showing which variables (excuse me—I mean which people, weapons and locations) could not have been

involved in the crime. Then the participants roll the dice, picking up cryptic clues and making intermittent suggestions about the identity of the murderer and his or her modus operandi.

So what does the video-game version of *Clue* offer that the board game doesn't? Well, for one thing, you get some cool cinema displays illustrating players' suggestions—if you conjecture, in "interrogation" mode, that the



the NES, the computerized players move so fast that it's almost impossible to keep track of the action; rather than absorb the clues at your leisure, you have to write them down as soon as possible, which makes for a rather nerve-racking experience. Also, these players are no rocket scientists: After deliberately bowing out of the middle of one game, I watched as my imaginary opponents wore a deep groove between the lounge and the conservatory, repeating many suggestions that had earlier been posed and disproved.

"Fine," I can hear you saying. "What if I want to play with friends or family?" Well, this is where we have a serious difference of opinion: I can think of nothing more ridiculous than four people sitting down in front



crime was committed by Mrs. Peacock with the rope in the billiards room, the computer will give you a dramatic re-creation (à la *A Current Affair*) up to the point where another player can prove you

of a TV set to play *Clue* when there's a perfectly usable (and much cheaper) board game hidden in the closet. Call me old-fashioned, but, when you have real live human beings over, I think you should actually go out of your way to *talk* to them.

—Bob Strauss

Parker Brothers  
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Beverly, MA 01915  
(508) 927-7600

wrong. These displays are done with a fair amount of wit, and the accompanying music is properly atmospheric, like the score to a 1940s film noir.

However, the main *raison d'être* for *Clue* is that it allows you to play alone against up to five computerized opponents—and this is where the adaptation starts to run into some serious trouble. As in Parker Brothers' first board-game conversion, *Monopoly* for

## EDITORS' CORNER

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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Chris notes that the cinematic scenes make it more fun than you'd expect, but all agreed that it was a clean and simple port to pixels.

# Spider-Man: Return of the Sinister Six

LJN

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The most recognizable character in Marvel Comics' stable of superheroes, the Amazing Spider-Man has had a checkered past in the history of video games and computer entertainment. From a modest debut in Parker Bros.' cartridge for the Atari 2600 to a Scott Adams *Questprobe* adventure for 8-bit computers, from a pair of Paragon PC adventures to scrolling adventures on the Game Boy, Genesis and Game Gear, his red-and-blue tights are always a welcome sight.

In this scrolling beat-'em-up, Spider-Man jumps, kicks, spins webs and punches out bad guys. Hey, what did you expect, a role-playing game? The pace is steady and frantic, with a pretty fair difficulty curve, and the super-villains' attacks are often completely unpredictable—a nice change from the stale patterns that most boss characters follow.

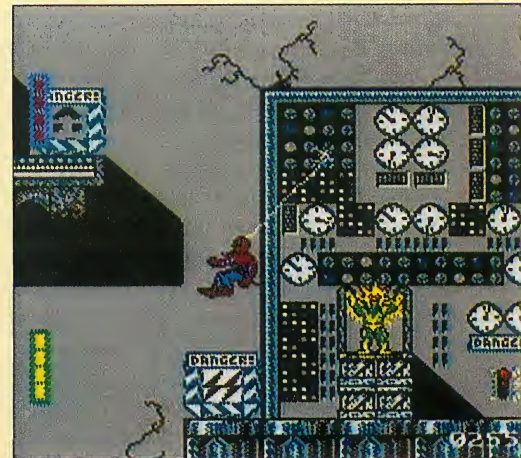
The graphics and sounds in *Spider-Man: Return of the Sinister Six* are fairly well-done. The soundtrack is particularly noteworthy, even though the odd slide guitar tones in certain areas seem like they'd be better suited to a game with a more humorous theme. Spidey and his foes look pretty good, in spite of their small size, and the characters' movements are pretty smooth. One weakness is the animation of the main character as he crawls up a wall, as he appears to gain about 50 pounds whenever he turns his back to the "camera."

The game's atmosphere—and to a certain extent, its integrity—is largely due to its roots in Spider-Man's comic book history. The Sinister Six was formed in the '60s under the guiding hands of Stan Lee and Steve Ditko, the original *Amazing Spider-Man* creative team. Though the six super-villains—Electro, the Sandman, the Vulture, Doctor Octopus, Mysterio and the late Green Goblin (who is replaced in the



new team by the Hobgoblin)—banded together to defeat their mortal enemy by joining forces against him, they ended up battling him one at a time, with a different fight breaking out every few pages.

Now there's a video-game story line for you! Lee and Ditko seem to have invented the concept of the "boss character" years before video games appeared before the public eye. In fact, the gimmick in the original Sinister Six story was that each of the six battles was highlighted by a full-page "splash panel" pin-up that appeared in the middle of each fight. B.I.T.S. has retained the flavor of this



idea with full-screen illustrations that introduce each of the rounds of the video game.

As surprising as it is to learn that this is the web-slinger's first NES appearance, it's also interesting to note that *Spider-Man: Return of the Sinister Six* will not be appearing on the Super NES. The word in the industry is that Sega has acquired the exclusive right to produce Spider-Man software for all 16-bit game systems. That's good news for NES owners, who are just starting to realize how quickly the support for any game system can evaporate. There's always a place for a good, original 8-bit title, and the NES *Spider-Man* fits that description pretty well.

—Chris Bieniek

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| EDITORS' COMMENTS |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| AE                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| CB                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| DM                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Three out of four editors surveyed said that this chapter in Spidey's history had potential, but was hindered overall by a difficult control scheme.

# New Adventure Island

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16 (\$54.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

If you're familiar with the *Adventure Island* series of games—and what gamer isn't these days?—then you'll enjoy *New Adventure Island* for the TG-16. It's a game of precisely timed jumps and shooting.

The game opens at the church where Master Higgins is to wed Tina—remember her from *Adventure Island*



II? Well, the evil Baron Bronsky won't stand for this, because he wants to wed Tina himself. The evil baron captures Tina and six island children, and hides them on separate islands. As Master Higgins, you must rescue the children and, finally, Tina herself.

You'll be fighting your way through seven islands, the first six having four areas each and the seventh island being Bronsky's castle. The islands are made up of various stages, such as the jungle, the desert, an ice level and a weather level—the latter three stages consist of rain, snow and sunshine. At the end of each level, there is a castle with a boss that must be defeated before you can proceed to the next island.

Along the way, you'll encounter some familiar enemies such as bats, spiders, snakes and frogs. There are some new enemies and obstacles as well: a salamander-type creature; a snowman that turns into a pig when it's shot; jumping bunnies and mice; fire-breathing platforms; spiked carts; and a skull that shoots fireballs at you.

To help you cut through, there are

weapons scattered throughout each level in the form of hatchets, boomerangs, arrows and hidden fire-power. You'll also face a bevy of skateboards, honey girls and the dreaded, power-draining eggplant in eggs, as well as hidden eggs with 1-ups, bonus fruit or milk to boost your energy points. As with all the *Adventure Island* games, you must replenish your energy often by eating fruit. There's plenty of it, but it disappears quickly once it's in view.

There are two features that help you on your way to finishing *New Adventure Island*. First, there are unlimited continues. You are able to continue from the stage you were killed on. This differs from previous installments that threw you back to the beginning of the world, instead of the beginning of the stage you're play-

ing. The other feature is the midstage checkpoint, which is only available for the first three stages of a level. As long as you have passed this flag and don't lose all of your lives, you will restart from this midpoint.

The game's graphics are great, but the music and sound effects are average. Also, during the weather level, there are annoying rain and snow effects. Although they look great graphically, they end up as more of a distraction to game play.

*New Adventure Island* is an enjoyable game, but, unfortunately, one that can be finished in a few hours. The main hitch to success is in controlling Master Higgins—the jumping mechanic is a bit hard to coordinate—but once you've mastered that, you'll mop up. While it's nice to see the *Adventure Island* series being expanded to the TurboGrafx-16 line, this "new" version is somewhat lightweight.

—Bissy Eddy

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## EDITORS' CORNER

|    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| AE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Andy, Chris and Mike all thought *New Adventure Island* had sound and graphics to match the previous versions, but Dave felt it was stiff.

# Super High Impact

ARENA ENTERTAINMENT

For the Sega Genesis (\$49.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

A person's choice of football video game is a deeply personal thing. Some prefer games that mimic the trappings and excitement of the event itself; some would rather have less glitz and more hands-on, in-depth strategy. And some, or so Arena Entertainment is betting, can't decide whether they'd rather be playing football or going ten rounds in the ring. This is the premise of *Super High Impact*, a new "in-your-face" approach to football video gaming with none of the frills you've come to expect and several you never thought you would see.

This is a one-game-at-a-time proposition. You're not going to play a season's worth of games; you're not worrying about your standings in the league; you're not even going for a Super Bowl win. *Super High Impact* lets you choose from 18 fantasy teams—no names, no stats, no managerial options whatsoever—in any of three leagues (read "three leagues" as three difficulty levels when playing against the computer).

Not that there are *no* options at all: You can choose grass or the plastic stuff, the length of the quarter and whether fighting is turned on or off (more about that in a moment). You then proceed to play your basic football game versus the computer, a second player or two players against the computer.

There are 16 offensive and 16 defensive plays, all fairly standard. You control the quarterback or running back on offense and various players on defense depending on the play you choose.

Here's where things get hairy. On offense, you can twist or jump away from the linemen; successful tackles are rated for their bone-jarring violence. The "C" button will give the player you're controlling an extra burst of energy, once per play, so tackles can be intense enough to shake the

screen, blow the carrier's helmet to smithereens and send his pads across the field. The same option, used by the offense, can give your man the burst he needs to break free and score.

Of course, all that gridiron ballet is going to tick somebody off. So fights break out spontaneously after plays, and the whole team gets involved. You pound on the buttons as fast as you can to beat the other team to a pulp, though there doesn't seem to be much measurable outcome other than the thrill of "winning" the fight. Incidentally, this pounding is also how you build up energy during punts, kickoffs and field goals.

The game earns its highest marks for sound and graphics.



## EDITORS' CORNER

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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Everyone thought the game was fun. Chris said it's not for the gridiron purist, while Dave labeled it as "fast and brutal; a perfect simulation."

There are loads of digitized calls and insults ("Eat this!" took me by surprise). Accompanying this are small, animated windows with refs making calls and coaches shaking their heads in disbelief or hanging them in shame. The on-screen players actually look great; they're detailed, they move realistically and they all have plenty of personality.

Unfortunately, there's not enough depth to *Super High Impact* to keep it interesting to those who love real football. The wild tackling and fighting are novelties that add little to the game play. Unless you really prefer footbrawl to football, this one's more fun to watch than to play.

—Josh Mandel

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# Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles IV: Turtles in Time

KONAMI  
For the Super NES (N/A)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

They're mean, they're green and they've hit the Super NES scene. After three awesome adventures on the 8-bit NES, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles have made the jump to Nintendo's 16-bit wonder console with *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles IV: Turtles in Time*, which is a conversion of Konami's own hit coin-op, *TMNT II*. (The first *TMNT* coin-op became *TMNT II* on the NES.) As always, the Valley-talking, pizza-scarfing foursome is up against the evil Shredder and his Foot Clan. Shred-head has snatched the Statue of Liberty out of New York, and the Turtles have to track down the Shredder and take back Lady Liberty. At the end of the fourth level (there are ten levels in all), the Turtles find Shredder, but he's not ready to give up. Instead, he activates a Matrix Displacement Beam that sends the Turtles back—way back—in time. The remaining six levels take the Turtles through various eras of history, from 2,500,000 B.C. ("Prehistoric Turtle-saurus") to 2100 A.D. ("Where No Turtle Has Gone Before") and back to the present, where they go up against Shredder in a fight to the finish. *TMNT IV* has two subgames in addition to the main adventure. In the Time Trial, your goal is to fight through five rounds of bad guys as quickly as possible. In the Versus mode, two players battle each other, with each player controlling one of the four Turtles. Great beat-'em-ups always have a wide variety of attack moves, and *TMNT IV* is a great beat-'em-up. You have seven moves to choose from (nine in the Versus mode), and each Turtle has his own "Special Technique" move. My favorite move has to be the Catapult, where the Turtle grabs his enemy and throws him straight out of the screen,

an effect that truly has to be seen to be appreciated. *TMNT IV*'s graphics are excellent. Scaling and rotation are used sparingly, but effectively, and the backgrounds for each level are disgustingly bright and cheerful. The music and sound effects are also well done, although the speech samples that introduce each level are just plain goofy. *TMNT IV*'s only flaw is that the game is easy to beat. Two of my friends were able to play through the game, at the normal level of difficulty, in less than an hour, and I was able to beat the game at the hard level in a single day. Konami knows how to make a challenging game (*Contra III: The Alien Wars* being a prime example), so I was surprised at the wimpy difficulty level. Even with the lack of challenge, there's a lot to like about this game: gorgeous graphics, rocking soundtracks and superb playability. *TMNT IV* is a "must-buy" for novices

and younger players, and a "must-rent" for expert players.

—Zach Meston

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## EDITORS' CORNER

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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Though a bit easy, *TMNT IV* certainly doesn't fail to entertain. Dave saw too many ninjas repeated, while Mike hopes there won't be too many *Turtle* sequels.



# Gargoyle's Quest II

CAPCOM

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (N/A)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

What's a gargoyle to do? Although Firebrand has spent much of his time in the Warrior's Training Center practicing his battle skills, it seems it may all have been for naught. Now, a strange black light has appeared in The Ghoulish Realm, leeching all magic from the land. Firebrand has little choice. Left alone in the training center, it's fallen to him to solve the mystery of the black light.

In *Gargoyle's Quest II*, it's your task to guide Firebrand through his many trials and tribulations. On your way to solving the mystery of the black light,



That's not to say that *Gargoyle's Quest II* is an easy game. Far from it, in fact. If you consider yourself to be a jump-and-shoot expert, you'll find this game to contain many new challenges. Gathering each of the vials in a level requires precise timing and skilled button punching. For this reason, *Gargoyle's Quest II* is as much a puzzle game as it is a jump-and-shoot, action contest. Thought and experimentation are the road to victory. But quick reflexes on the control pad don't hurt, either!

You'll need those quick re-

flexes as you make your way through each level and confront an army of enemies, including specters, bats, killer ostriches (hey, don't blame me; I didn't write the game!), fire demons and harpies. Each creature has its own way of moving and attacking, so if you plan to conquer each level, you'll need to be observant as well as fast.

While your main objective is to gather all the vials (most of which have been tucked away in sadistically hard-to-reach locations), you'll also stumble upon additional treasures, which will boost your powers or recover your strength. For example, certain jars, when scooped up, both fill and lengthen your lifeline. In addition, hearts



restore lost life points.

The Ghoulish Realm is, of course, a magical place. Firebrand, too, has access to various magical powers. He starts his quest with only fireball magic, which allows him to spit balls of fire at his enemies. As he completes quests, however, he will gain access to other magical skills, including the ability to smash blocks, climb deadly spikes and restore his energy.

To sum things up, although *Gargoyle's Quest II* breaks no new ground, it's a playable and habit-forming contest with which you'll enjoy many challenging, nerve-racking and, yes, *frustrating* moments. This one's an essential purchase for jump-and-shoot fans who think they've mastered the genre.

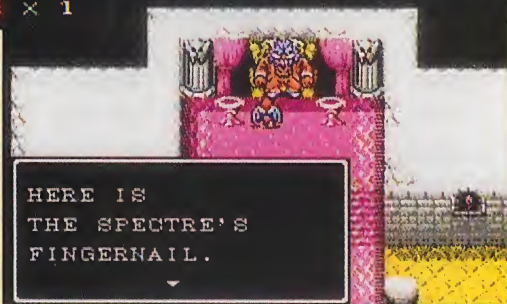
—Clayton Walnum

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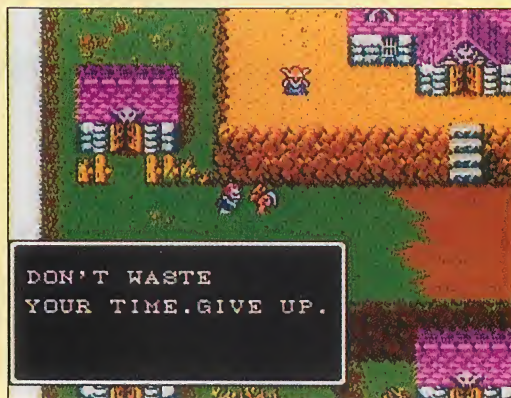


you'll have obstacles to overcome and creatures to defeat—not to mention treasures to find. But, you must be hot on the controller pad if you're going to successfully move Firebrand through each level, leaping from platform to platform, floating in the air and blasting the enemies that get in your path.

Luckily, one of *Gargoyle's Quest II*'s strong points is the elegant control system, which enables you to make Firebrand jump, drop, hover or climb. Although the controls take some getting used to, once you get the hang of them, you'll be impressed by their simplicity and flexibility. Whether you're leaping to a platform, climbing the side of a building or drifting in the air, the controls are responsive and easy to master.



HERE IS THE SPECTRE'S FINGERNAIL.



DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME. GIVE UP.

## EDITORS' CORNER

|    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| AE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| CB | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

It was decided that *Gargoyle's Quest II* wasn't great, wasn't bad; the controls were quirky, and Chris felt it was fun but a little past its prime.



# Jennifer Capriati Tennis

RENOVATION

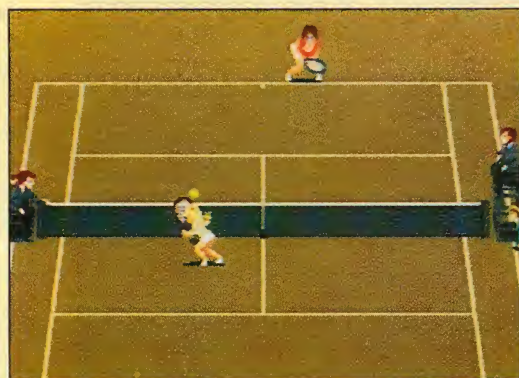
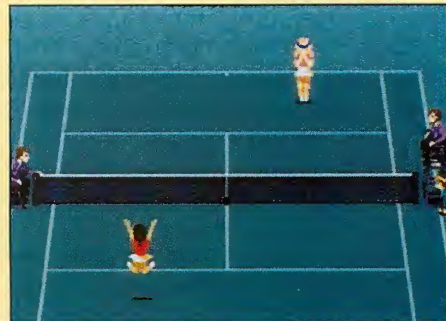
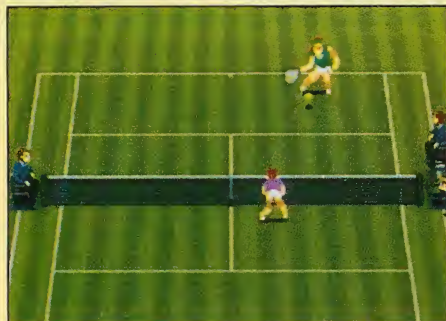
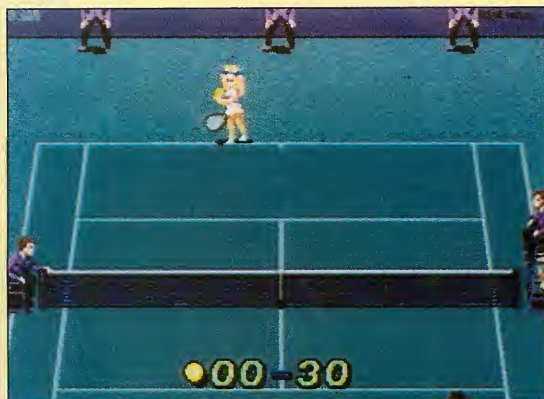
For the Sega Genesis (\$49.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Just in time for Jennifer Capriati's transformation from the impossibly perky, autograph-signing sprite of as recently as last year's U.S. Open to the humorless, world-weary postadolescent of 1992, here comes *Jennifer Capriati Tennis*, by all indications a generic Japanese tennis game that Renovation saw fit to add Capriati's name to before introducing it in the U.S. How do I know this? Well, for starters, in the prototype I sampled, Jennifer has red hair, while any tennis fan worth his or her salt will tell you she's a born brunette. I also have a hunch that the players in this cart were compelled to undergo last-minute sex-change operations—nothing against female athletes, mind you, but these ladies hit the ball awfully hard. If this were the Olympics, they'd be in for some serious Y-chromosome testing.

If you can get past this clumsy subterfuge, though, you'll find *Jennifer Capriati Tennis* to be a

better-than-average simulation. There are the usual variety of play options (singles against the computer, doubles with a friend against the computer, etc.); a couple of innovative, if superfluous, features (a training mode in which you practice strokes with a coach, a customizing option that allows you to create your own player); and a respectable array of computerized male and female opponents, whose names, in tradi-



"bleh." While I suppose I can excuse Renovation for not programming in Jennifer Capriati's charming grunts—I recall a Wimbledon match of hers against Monica Seles (herself a famous grunter) that prompted the British press to compare both players to barnyard animals—I can't forgive the dinky crowd noises, especially the lone whistle at the conclusion of every point that sounds like a bratty kid scraping chalk on a blackboard.

Overall, perhaps the most impressive thing about *Jennifer Capriati Tennis* is that Renovation had the guts to introduce a girls-only title into the testosterone-laden, little-boys-in-the-clubhouse world of video games. But just one word of warning, guys: Having the female players sob uncontrollably when they lose a match might be construed as being just a bit sexist.

—Bob Strauss

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tional made-in-Japan fashion, all seem a little bit off—"Klubb" from England, "Martiloa" from Czechoslovakia...you get the idea.

Most important of all, the play control in *Jennifer Capriati Tennis* is surprisingly fluid. While there aren't as many ball-control options as in, say, Nintendo's *Super Tennis*—mainly because the Genesis controller has half as many buttons as the Super NES controller—the game play doesn't suffer all that much by comparison. In fact, I'd venture to say that Renovation's game is more realistic—if you can reach the ball in *Super Tennis*, you're practically guaranteed to land it in bounds; whereas *Jennifer Capriati* requires a little more finesse.

About the only area where *Jennifer Capriati Tennis* serves up a fault is audio. Everything in this game sounds as if it were recorded in a shoebox, especially the umpire, who instructs players to commence serve with an unplaceable, Peter Lorre-inflected



**EDITORS' CORNER**

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Mike noted that *Jennifer Capriati Tennis* failed to utilize the Genesis' potential, and the sound and graphics hurt it too much for Andy's tastes.

# Dead Moon

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16 (\$49.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

It has been two centuries since humankind began exploring space, and a monitoring system at the far reaches of the solar system has picked up something strange. There appears to be a new comet moving through the system, but calculations predict that it will miss Earth easily. Probes are sent out to study the comet, but, as they approach, it suddenly becomes brighter. It changes course toward the probes, destroys them and moves toward Earth.

The U.N. member nations combine their efforts and create special orbit-shifting missiles that are fired toward the comet to change its course. Instead of crashing into the Earth, it hits our moon instead, creating a large crater. Probes sent to study the remains find nothing of the comet, but do find a group of alien spacecraft lurking about.

What does all of this mean, you say? A response to the critical shortage of horizontally scrolling shooters perhaps?

*Dead Moon* is indeed a horizontal scroller, and



provide a measure of protection from the enemies and have several levels of power as well. An occasional "smart bomb" power-up will also float by, which clears the screen of enemies when nabbed.



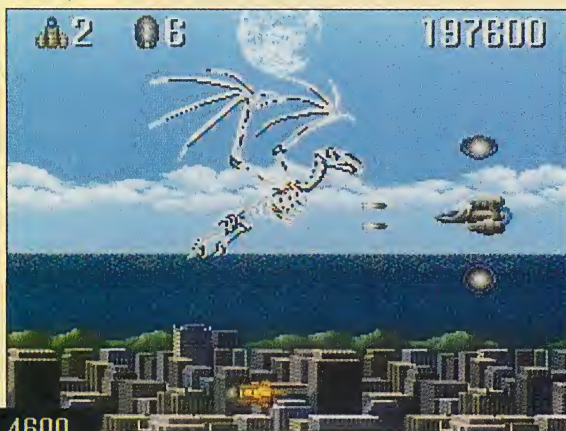
The enemies follow set patterns that are fairly easy to memorize after a few plays, and about the only strategy required is deciding which weapons work best upon which enemies and bosses. Building up your weapon's power isn't really a problem, as not only are the power-ups fairly plentiful, but they are usually easy to grab. One level actually gives you *eight* power-ups in a row before a single enemy appears.

Graphics, both background and foreground, aren't too bad. The enemies are varied and look okay, though the bosses are a bit plain. The backgrounds have excellent scrolling—I counted nine separate planes of scrolling in one area—and are pretty good throughout.

Longevity is going to be the problem, as you can probably guess. Six levels and unlimited continues should let even weaker players knock this one off without much work. As compared to other shooters available for the TG-16, it certainly isn't the worst, but it doesn't have any freshness to make it especially attractive.

—Brent Walker

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includes the typical power-ups, a choice of weapons and plenty of blasting to be done. It has been said that there is always room for another shooter, but....

There are only six levels to complete, of which some are divided into two sections. Your mission proceeds first from the cities of Earth. After clearing the skies there, you move into space. From there, it's to the surface of the moon, then into a cave beneath the surface, a hidden lake and finally the core of the moon. Apparently unlimited continues make this game seem even shorter, unfortunately. Each game starts with three lives and three "bombs" for inflicting heavy damage.

Power-ups consist of four different weapon types, each of which has four levels of destruction. Guided missile and circling "drone" power-ups also



## EDITORS' CORNER

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

"Cool" and "hot" were comments logged on *Dead Moon*. Chris saw it as too short, but Dave said it was his pick when an urge to destroy struck.

# The Duel: Test Drive II

BALLISTIC

For the Super NES (\$59.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

"Test Drive II..." the voice beckons (is it male or female?) after I insert the game pak and power on the system. Yes, must play...must play *The Duel: Test Drive II*.... I decree that the Porsche 959 shall be my chariot. (I forgo the Ferrari F40, with its candy-apple sheen, as well as the Lamborghini Diablo.)

I cruise the winding road in my showroom dream at a steady 195 m.p.h., the envy of others who dare ride my path in their sedans, compacts and that monstrous beast known as



the "family van." *Be gone!!* I intone as I honk the horn, shift gears and pass the mere laymen, for I am the master, a god among mortals.

But alas! In the rearview, I find another like myself. He rockets from behind in his Ferrari. I quickly maneuver to block his advance—then the radar detector sounds. An officer of the law is coming from my right! Shall I slow to the speed limit and allow my opponent to pass or follow the law of the road?

Four racing scenes have differing climate and road conditions. The most difficult has it all: the twistiest road, rain, snow, night driving and lots of stuff for you to crash your insurance money pit into. The roads are divided into sections with gas stations at the finish. The goal is to beat your fellow auto-dueler to the stations.

Gear shifting may be switched to automatic or manual, and your car's height can be lowered or

**Lamborghini Diablo** Press 'down' for more info

Approximate Price: \$239,000  
 Layout: mid engine, rear wheel drive  
 Engine Type: DOHC 48 valve, normally aspirated V12  
 Displacement: 5707 cc  
 Compression: 10.0:1

heightened. The laws of physics bow to your whim, too. Drag, brake and acceleration coefficients, g-forces and speed loss from friction can be tweaked.

Point-of-view racers lose a lot of the driving fun and control when pad controllers and joysticks have to be substituted for steering wheels. *The Duel* is no exception. It's hard to tell if you will pass a car without hitting it, so you'll overestimate and probably run off the road or into the opposing lane.

Since this is a straight port-over from the computer version, which has been around for awhile, the road graphics don't have the dazzle of *F-Zero*. It doesn't help either that over half of the screen is sucked up by the



steering wheel and dashboard. Animation quality is so-so. The three-dimensional depth of other cars is weak.

Digitized voices back things up that don't need it. A cop appears in the rearview, so a voice exclaims "uh-oh!" (no duh). As your car makes a less-than-spectacular leap over a hilly road, "your" voice shouts in glee like the canned laughter roaring away in the dead spots of a sitcom.

The manual was a good read, though. Never figured out if the car horn really did anything useful.

—Howard H. Wen

Ballistic  
 550 S. Winchester Blvd., Suite 200  
 San Jose, CA 95128  
 (408) 985-1700

### EDITORS' CORNER

|    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| AE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The editorial staff gave the nod to *Test Drive II* for play value, but Andy didn't think it put the SNES through a workout. High-speed action, for sure.

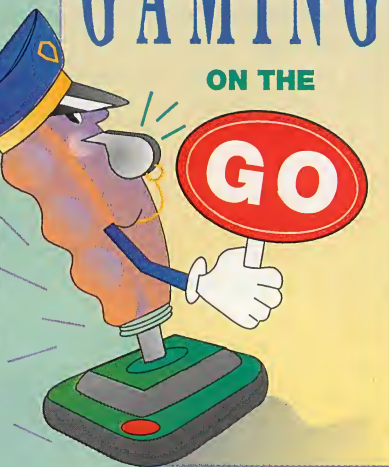
**W**elcome back to VG&CE's portable pages, your best source for objective opinions and fascinating handheld video-game trivia.

Here's a little food for thought: Why did Taito pull the plug on the Game Boy version of *Space Invaders*? Why won't the "Lynx *Street Fighter II*" rumor go away? Why does the Game Gear battery pack take eight hours to recharge up to its full three-hour capacity? You won't find the answers to these rhetorical questions in this month's column, but, as a certain middle-aged man once said, "I'm workin' on it!"

Hope your batteries are charged up, 'cause here we go....

# GAMING

ON THE



## Batman Returns

SEGA

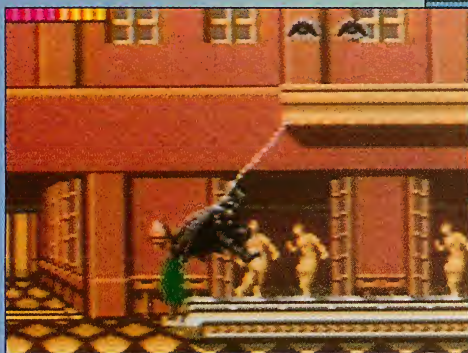
For the Sega Game Gear (\$34.99)

BY  
CHRIS BIENIEK

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Big news from Sega this month: *Batman Returns* is definitely the hottest Game Gear title I've seen since *Sonic the Hedgehog* made the jump to the portable scene. A scrolling beat-'em-up in the tradition of just about every other *Batman* video game, this flashy adventure somehow manages to inject a sense of freshness into the action at nearly every turn.

From the solemn cinema-style introduction to the stylish, evocative ending sequence, *Batman Returns* spares no expense in delivering a classy video-game experience to the Game Gear player. To say that there are five levels in the game is to underestimate its length. Not only is each level broken down into at least two subsections—six in the case of the last stage—but there are



Holy handhelds!—it's *Batman Returns* for the Game Gear!

two alternate routes in each of the first four areas. That's a total of 16 different paths to the final battle against the Penguin, and most of these areas feature distinctly different music and scenery. I refuse to believe Sega's PR boasts that the background graphics have been "digitized from real video footage on the movie set," but they're still a big improvement over the standard brick buildings and clouds.

The characters are very well-drawn: Batman's cape billows in the wind; Catwoman tumbles like an Olympic gymnast (albeit a leather-clad one); and most of the "generic" bad guys are distinctly different from one area to the next. The Dark Knight even gets to do a little bit of Spider-Man-style swinging. The controls are readily understandable, and, if the earlier levels are a bit on the easy side, it only serves to draw you into the game's more advanced levels with a sharper hook. Sadly, the snap, crackle and pop of the Game Gear's sound chip can't quite do this game justice.

With larger characters and a little bit of layered scrolling—which I've hardly seen in a Game Gear title since *Shinobi*—this might have been even better than the blockbuster it already is. But the most controversial question raised by *Batman Returns* is this: Why can't every Game Gear title be this good?

Sega of America Inc.  
130 Shoreline Drive  
Redwood City, CA 94065  
(415) 508-2800

## WordZap

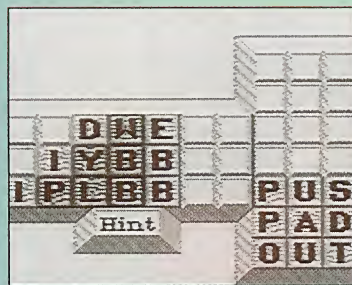
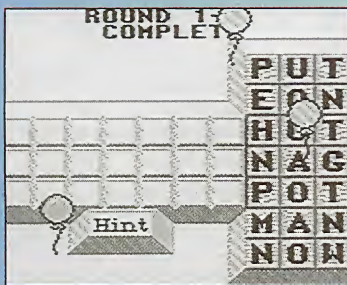
JALECO

For the Nintendo Game Boy  
(\$29.95)

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You'd think that the early days of Game Boy software development had already given us a decade's worth of puzzle games. Just as Nintendo and its licensees had to prove that the Game Boy was capable of much more than simple block-pushing contests like *Kwirk* and *Catrap*, so must Jaleco now convince us that one of these tiny gray cartridges can hold a reference dictionary that's comprehensive enough to make a game like *WordZap* credible.

This one's actually two games in one: Players can choose between *WordZap* (a



**WordZap may indeed have a larger vocabulary than some dictionaries.**

free-form Scrabble variant) and *WordHai*, which is an interesting hybrid of Scrabble and the ancient tile game, mah-jongg. I liked *WordHai* better, if only because there's no time limit involved; but they both give the player a very solid mental workout.

Of course, eye-popping graphics are not high on the priority list when games like these are developed, and *WordZap's* celebratory balloons and fireworks are not much more than token reward for completing each successive level. What's more important is the game's vocabulary. Will the computer accept lesser-known words as valid entries? No problem there. *WordZap's* internal word list is almost *too* flexible. Not only does it let you get away with a nonsensical term like "swive," but the computer even goes so far as to suggest strange words like "whap" if you ask it for help.

The fact that *WordZap* doesn't really require any control-pad skills makes it a little more accessible than Spectrum Holobyte's equally impressive Game Boy debut, *WordTris*. But there's a lot to be said for both of these games, which provide a nice alternative to the glut of *Super Mario* clones and shoot-'em-ups that dominate the libraries of *all* of the video-game systems.

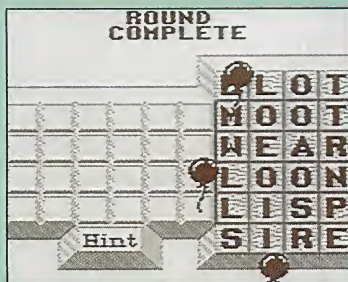
Jaleco USA Inc.  
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Northbrook, IL 60062  
(708) 480-1811

## Shadow of the Beast

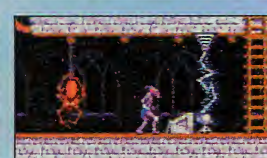
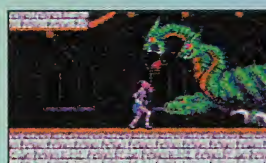
ATARI  
For the Atari Lynx (\$39.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Wow! Check out the specs on this game: 12 levels of multiplane scrolling, the fastest frame rate of any Lynx game, 96 different monsters, over 200 sound effects and over 30 minutes of original music! Visually, *Shadow of the Beast* is by far the finest Lynx game ever released,



**Shadow of the Beast: The best Lynx graphics yet?**



and it doesn't fare too badly in the audio department, either. The atmosphere generated by this side-scrolling beat-'em-up is absolutely overwhelming—it's at least as evocative as any previous version of *Psygnosis'* most recognizable title, if not more so.

Of course, the nagging criticism that has dogged every single version of *Shadow of the Beast* is that the game has sacrificed entertaining game play in favor of graphic excellence. The Lynx version is at times open to that argument, but it should be noted that Digital Developments has made some attempt to make improve-

ments on the original *Shadow of the Beast*, most notably by exploiting the hardware's scaling abilities at every given opportunity.

But, oh, the graphics! Bizarre alien landscapes, skeletal creatures, floating eyeballs and dragon beasts are the order of the day—it's like a living, breathing Roger Dean painting in the palm of your hand. The "boss" characters are huge, the character animation is supersmooth and the environment is so off-the-wall that you never can tell who your next opponent will be.

One word of caution: Like the Lynx version of *Batman Returns*, this is an extremely difficult game that requires a lot of patience and skill. If you can get around that obstacle, you'll find a big winner in *Shadow of the Beast*.

Atari Entertainment  
500 Watersedge Drive, Suite 310  
Lombard, IL 60148  
(708) 629-6500

# Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

U.S. GOLD

For the Sega Game Gear (\$39.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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Big characters bring *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* to life on the Game Gear.



It appears that Gotham City is not the only source of Game Gear excitement this month. The whip-crackin' star of some of the biggest motion picture adventures of all time has hit Sega's portable with characteristic nonchalance and sense of humor intact. In *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, a smoothly animated Indy saunters around with

floppy hat and whip in search of lost treasures and the dangers that guard them.

Though the *Indiana Jones* theme that plays behind the title screen is okay, there's no background music to keep your toes tapping as you put Indy through his paces, and the sound effects are very run-of-the-mill. Happily, the graphics are very impressive, with large characters and detailed scenery.

I've never been particularly fond of run-and-jump games in which your character can be injured by hitting his or her head on the ceiling while trying to jump over an obstacle. Nor do I care for games that don't allow much control of your character while he or she is in the middle of a jump. As unfortunate as it is that *Indiana Jones* ended up in both of these categories, the game's positives do tend to outweigh the negatives in the long run.

U.S. Gold has a number of very strong Game Gear titles—its *Olympic Gold*

game has wowed the press in the United Kingdom, where a Sega-only magazine has referred to it as one of the best games available for Sega's 8-bit system. I'll chalk up another victory for the company on behalf of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, and bite my nails in anticipation of its upcoming *Strider 2* cartridge.

U.S. Gold Inc.  
631 Howard St., Suite 310  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 281-8690

# Star Wars

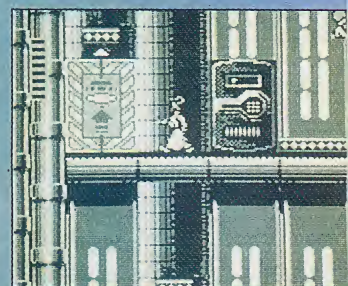
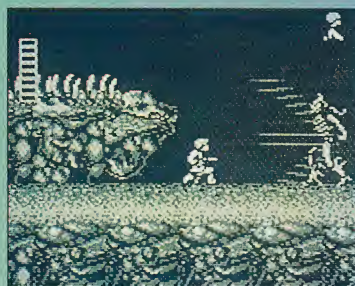
CAPCOM

For the Nintendo Game Boy (N/A)

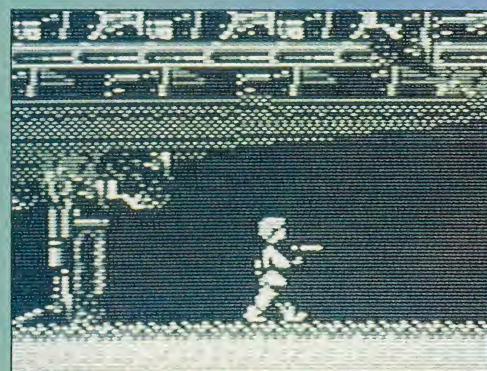
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| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Boy, if I could ever do something that was half as creative, as well-loved, as lucrative and as timelessly entertaining as George Lucas' *Star Wars* series, I'd be one happy camper. How could any video-game fan not love these films, even 15 years after the release of the original? It's no surprise that one of the most exciting games of the upcoming holiday season is JVC's *Super Star Wars* for the Super NES.

Though you can't realistically expect a Game Boy title to compete with software for the full-sized console systems, don't be surprised if Capcom's *Star Wars* causes a nice little splash of its own. This multi-



Star Wars—this game has The Force.





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UAA

**GAME BOY!**



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game adventure follows the plot of the original film fairly closely, and clones JVC's NES game almost to a tee. No kidding; Ubi Soft has squeezed the NES *Star Wars* into a Game Boy cartridge without a significant difference to be found.

From piloting your landspeeder through the deserts of Tatooine, to maneuvering the Millennium Falcon through an asteroid field, to dropping a torpedo into the exhaust port at the end of the trench that circles the Death Star, it's a pretty complete experience for *Star Wars* fans, or anyone who enjoys a mixture of run-and-jump action and first-person shoot-'em-up excitement.

The only thing I really didn't like about this interpretation of the classic film is the background music, which doesn't use enough of John Williams' original score. Still, this is one of the more enjoyable Game Boy titles to appear in recent months, and it's certainly worthy of the honor of bearing the *Star Wars* name.

Capcom U.S.A. Inc.  
3303 Scott Blvd.  
Santa Clara, CA 95054  
(408) 727-0400

## Pinball Jam

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx (\$39.99)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

"Oooh, let's party!" moans horror-host Elvira as you pull back the plunger to kick off Atari's latest Lynx title. A great value for your gaming dollar, *Pinball Jam* includes full-featured simulations of two real-life pinball machines, *Elvira and the Party Monsters* and *Police Force*.

With loads of realistic detail—right down to the longer, narrower flippers that characterize Bally/Midway and Williams machines—the games are carried on the strength of their authenticity. I have my doubts about the ability of the Lynx to generate clear images at the high speeds necessary to do an accurate pinball game, but *Pinball Jam* manages to do a pretty good job. The physics of the ball's movement are not always entirely accurate, but I've seen much worse.

The screen shots shown here are composites that show the entire playfield of each machine; in the real game, the playfield scrolls up and down to follow the ball as it moves around the table. Unlike



Two authentic machines mean some frantic flipper action in *Pinball Jam*.

some video-game pinball simulations, it's easy to keep up with the action in *Pinball Jam*. Even when you activate the multiball feature, a helpful pointer appears to give you an idea of where the other ball is when it's off the screen.

Of the two machines included, the *Elvira* game is more interesting because of the variety in the playfield and the character's amusing digitized comments. But there are digitized speech and sound effects in both games, and the high-speed action of *Police Force* will

surely be more appealing to the pinball enthusiast.

Most importantly, *Pinball Jam* plugs another gap in the Lynx software library. These are good times for Lynx owners, as there doesn't seem to be any shortage of original, high-quality titles for this system.

Atari Entertainment  
500 Watersedge Drive, Suite 310  
Lombard, IL 60148  
(708) 629-6500

Rather than speculate on which games will be covered next month, I'll leave you with a late-breaking Easter egg for the Lynx. Point the control pad Up and press **OPTION I** before *Tok's* title screen appears, and hold both buttons down during the entire introductory sequence. You'll enter the "freak-out mode," where you can experiment by pressing different buttons for some really wild audiovisual effects.

Reader feedback to this column is always appreciated. Send your comments and suggestions to: VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Attn: *Gaming on the Go*, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Computer owners with access to the DELPHI information service can also contact me via electronic mail sent to user name VGCHRIS, or stop by the "World of Video Games" special interest group and drop me a note in the public forum. 📧



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Game Boy Screens Pictured.

FOR THE



Super NES



SEARCHING FOR THE

# DARK WORLD

PART TWO

## A Player's Guide to Zelda, A Link to the Past

**W**elcome back for more exciting adventuring through the land of Hyrule. This time around, we'll discover lots of new secrets, as well as visit the Tower of Hera, the Dark World, the Lost Woods and Hyrule Castle. Also, during our new quests, we'll find lots of useful items, including pieces of heart, the magic mirror, the Moon Pearl, the Master Sword and the final pendant. Finally, we'll have our first battle with the evil wizard, Agahnim.

by Clayton Walnum





After finishing off Desert Palace, check your map again. It'll tell you that it's time to head north.



On the way to your next destination, check out things like this cave, which...



...is the hiding place for this little old man. Also, if you bomb the south wall...



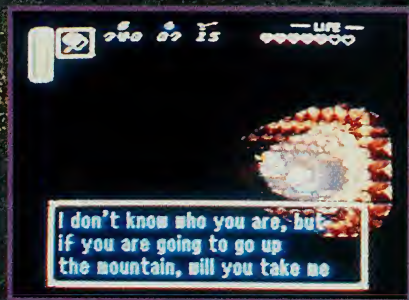
Check your map often to see how close you're getting to your destination.



This pile of rocks, too, hides a secret. Use your Pegasus shoes to bash into them, and...



...you'll find this secret room, which...



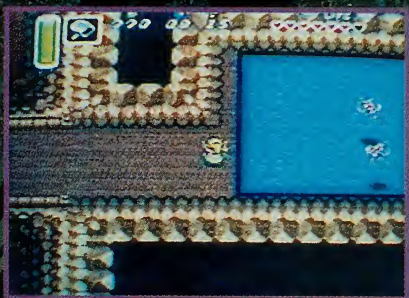
Look for this little man, who will guide you from the cave.



When you take the man back to his home, he'll give you the magic mirror.



In the back of the man's home, you'll find another cave.



Inside, you'll find two fairies, who can heal you.



If you catch a fairy with the net, you can put her in a jar. Then she'll automatically save you when you die.



You can reach this cave, too, by jumping from above.



...you'll find part of a heart!



Now that you have the power gloves, you can even pick up these huge boulders. Here, you'll find a secret stairway that...



...leads to a lot of good stuff.



...contains another piece of heart.



At the base of the northern cliffs, you must move this rock and enter this cave.



Inside the cave, it's tough to see.



The cave's twisting passages lead past many bats and treasures.



At the other end of the cave's passage, find this ladder and climb it.



You can get to this cave only by jumping down from above.



Inside the second cave, you'll find another piece of heart, as well as a message from your friend.



Finally, you'll find this curious square on the ground. When you step onto it...



...you'll be transported to a strange, parallel universe.



You can't do much as a bunny, but if you find this location and then use the magic mirror to return to the real world...



...you'll appear next to this piece of heart. Cool!



From the piece of heart, it's a short trip to the Tower of Hera, your next dungeon.



The map will help you locate all of the tower's rooms.



In this room, even the floor tiles will attack you. Stand in one place, continually swinging your sword, and you'll make out okay.



Don't release the two trapped worms until you've finished off the first one. There's no point in making things tougher than they already are.



As you make your way toward the tower's boss, don't fall through the openings in the floor. The crystal switch here clears a barricade in the next room.



The star plates in the floors cause the trapdoors in the floor to switch places.



Avoid the round, bumper devices, as they may toss you down a hole.



...the Moon Pearl, which prevents you from changing into a bunny when you enter the Dark World.



The tower's boss creature may be tough to beat at first. Learn how he moves. Then attack his tail whenever he goes into a circle.



When you defeat the tower's boss, you'll get another heart, and...



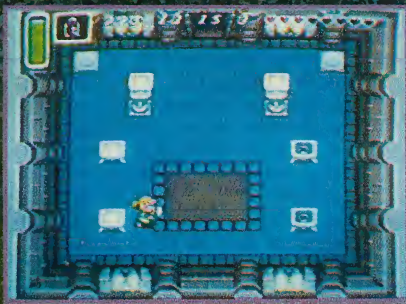
Inside the tower, you'll find lots of new devices, like these crystal switches that turn off barricades.



As with any dungeon, you'll need to find several keys.



If you get stuck anywhere in the Tower of Hera, you can use the magic mirror to return to the entrance and try again.



This room looks empty, but if you light all the fire pots...



...this chest will appear, which...



...contains this dungeon's master key.



The first time you're in this room, avoid the rotating fire, and step on the star switch. Then...



...fall down this hole, which...



...will drop you next to this big treasure chest. It contains...



...you'll also get the final pendant, allowing you to get the Master Sword.



In the Lost Woods, your next destination, everything is foggy and dark.



You'll need to find your way through a maze of hollow logs.



Several "fake" swords may fool you into thinking you've found the Master Sword.



But, when you come across the real Master Sword, you'll know you've found the real thing.



When you take the sword, the fog will clear from the Lost Woods, letting in sunshine for the first time in a long while.



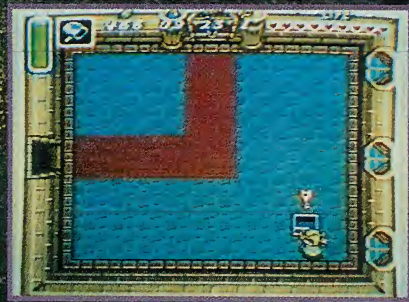
Also, under this pile of stones close to your house...



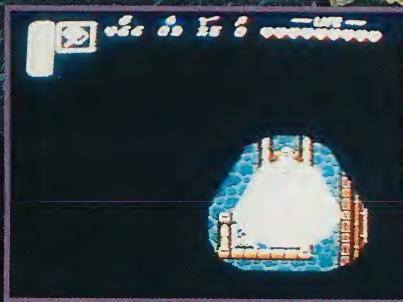
...you'll find yet another secret entrance. In this cave...



...you'll find four fairies. Fill up those bottles. You're going to need them.



...you'll reveal a chest containing a key.



In this new dungeon, you need to find your way through dark mazes, and...



...you'll need to balance on narrow walkways over bottomless pits.



But be ready to dodge Agahnim's devastating lightning attack.



If you're tough, Agahnim will give up, after which...





In the forest, look for this patch of six bushes, because...



...the center one hides a secret passage, which...



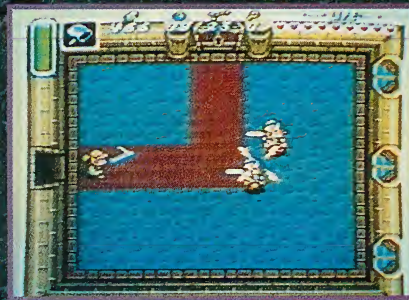
...will lead you to another piece of heart.



Now, it's back to Hyrule Castle to find Zelda, who's been kidnapped yet again. (She just can't seem to stay out of trouble, can she?) Find this door guarded by an energy beam.



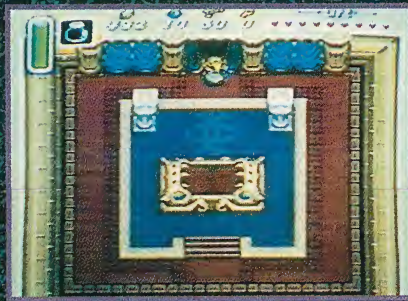
Hit the energy beam with the Master Sword, and you'll gain entrance to another dungeon.



Kill these two creatures and...



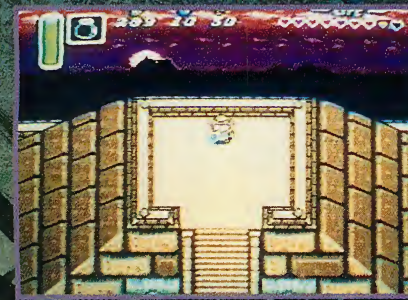
Eventually, you'll find Agahnim. He's got Zelda, but...



...before you can get near him, he'll make Zelda disappear, and then he'll run behind the curtains in the back of the room. Use your sword to part the curtains and find the entrance.



When you face Agahnim in battle, use the Master Sword to reflect his energy balls back at him.



...you'll find yourself at the top of the tower. From here, you'll embark on yet more adventures next month!

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I N S I D E

I have to admit, I'm a lucky guy—at least when it comes to making conversation at social gatherings. Whenever people ask me what I do for a living, I always get a laugh (or at least a reaction) because the honest answer is...I play video games. As group marketing director for Sega of America, my main responsibility is to head up software marketing, but the reason I'm in the business is because I'm a video gamer at heart.

At Sega, playing games is our business—and we take it seriously. Being video-game players lets us know what players want and has helped us earn the reputation as the video-game company that delivers more challenge, more graphics and more fun.

The 242 employees at our Redwood City, California, headquarters log hundreds of hours of hands-on video-game play every single day. Numerous television monitors and Sega Genesis systems are set up throughout the company—in offices, cubicles, staff lounges and even the boardroom. "Taking a break" at Sega can mean taking the Batmobile out for a spin around Gotham City with the new *Batman Returns* game, throwing around the pigskin with the NFL's most popular quarterback during a friendly game of *NFL SportsTalk Football '93 Starring Joe Montana* or embarking on a fantastic journey as magic user, dwarf or elf in Sega's new role-playing game, *Dungeons & Dragons: Warriors of the Eternal Sun*—the possibilities are endless.

I am both an avid PC and video-game player. In addition to playing



# GAMING

## SEGA TAKES VIDEO GAMES SERIOUSLY—IT'S OUR JOB

BY AL NILSEN

Sega games, I'll try top games put out by our competitors—yes, it is part of my job to play and conquer Nintendo games. But to be honest—if not modest—they're usually not challenging enough. Challenge and the value of extended game play are two of the most important ingredients in Sega games.

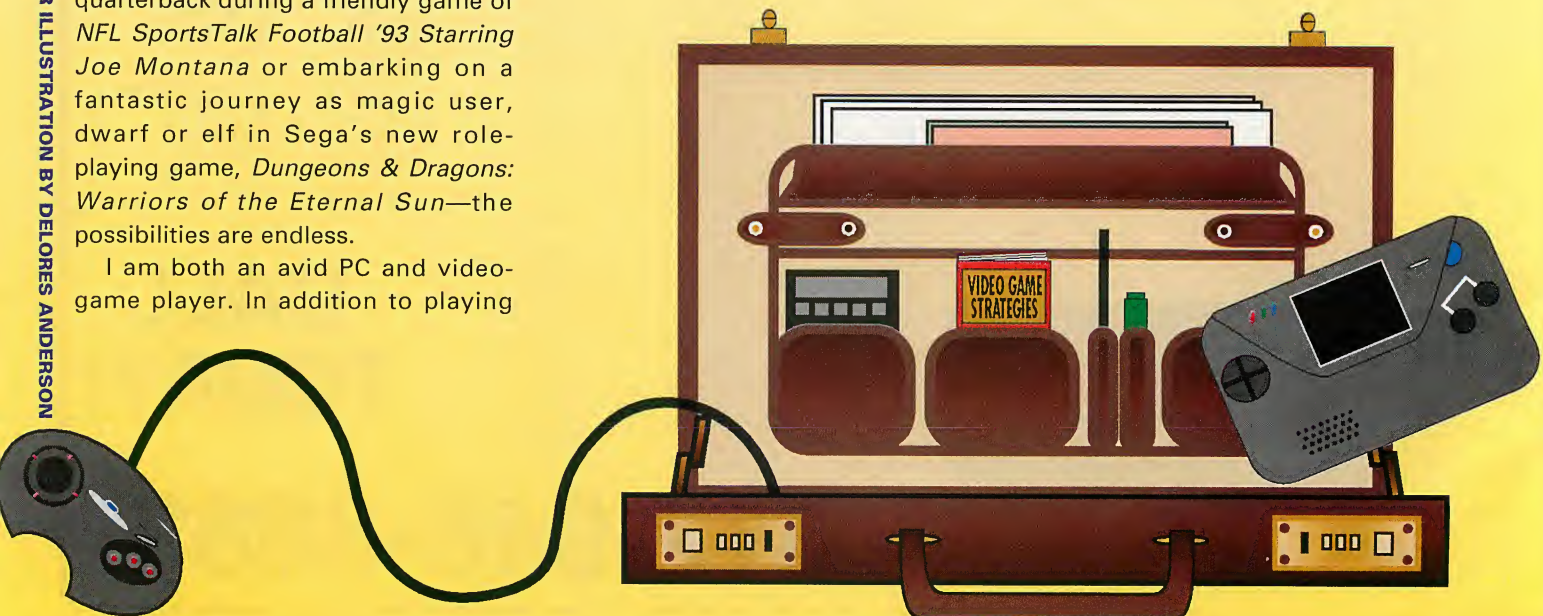
To gain deeper insights into this Sega-wide "video game-itis," I spoke with some of my coworkers to reveal what makes them video-game enthusiasts first, and businesspeople second. As you'll see, playing games can be a serious business.

### SEGA VIDEO GAMER PROFILES

Tom Kalinske's favorite game is *Sonic the Hedgehog*, although he admits that, even though he's CEO and president of Sega, his six-year-old daughter beats him most—actually, *all*—of the time. In the midst of fierce competition, Tom is known to stick out his tongue in "Michael Jordan-style" concentration.

Our resident video sports-game fanatic is Paul Rioux, senior vice-president of corporate development, finance and operations. Not surprisingly, Paul's expertise in numbers and statistics makes him a meticulous

COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION BY DELORES ANDERSON



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competitor for the winning scores in games like *Sports Talk Baseball* and *Wimbledon Tennis*. Paul warned me that he "doesn't lose often."

Ed Volkwein, senior vice-president, marketing, and my boss, is another *Sonic* fan, but admits that finishing *Kid Chameleon* is his lifetime goal (and one that he'll have to work hard to achieve, considering the game has more than 100 rounds, 1,800 game screens and loads of secret passages). Next week, I'm going to surprise him with a Galoob Game Genie for Genesis, which features over 100 codes for *Kid Chameleon* alone.

To accommodate her busy schedule, Ellen Beth Van Buskirk, director of marketing services, plays her games on the go with Sega's handheld color portable, the Game Gear. Ellen Beth is one of many *Sonic* fans, (I guess everyone's a *Sonic* fan at Sega) but admits she hasn't been able to get past the jungle zone...yet. Ellen Beth is easy to spot on a plane—she's the one frantically playing *Sonic* and screaming out loud when she loses. But don't let that intimidate you; just introduce yourself and she might even give you a *Sonic* pin.

Another Game Gear enthusiast is Haven Carter, product manager. Haven lives on a boat and has limited space, making Game Gear's portable convenience and compact size ideal. Game Gear's state-of-the-art graphics and excellent sound satisfy the demands of this avid video gamer, who's been rumored to play games late into the night. Haven also takes advantage of Game Gear's adaptability, using the TV tuner attachment to watch the nightly news.

Sega is not without its internal rivalries. Scott Steinberg, product manager, and Ken Balthaser Jr., of Sega's Multimedia Studio, face off against each other every week in a video-game duel. Alternating "home court" (or office) advantages, Scott and Ken compete in several rounds of play to win the championship title for the day. Currently, they've reached a standoff—Scott is the knockout king in *Evander Holyfield "Real Deal" Boxing*,

and Ken rules the boards in *David Robinson's Supreme Court*.

Sega employees may put in anywhere from two to ten or even 20 hours a week playing video games—by themselves, against friends or with their kids at home. But playing games is a full-time job for Sega's game counselors. Game counselors advise their peers on everything from setting up ideal game configurations and attaining new levels of video-game play to discovering "backdoor" tricks and secret invincibilities, attaining extra lives and achieving warp zones—all in a day's work.

(More "mature" counselors are in their early 20s.)

Over 35 game counselors receive up to 3,500 calls weekly. On a busy day, that's over 50 calls an hour. Counselors are die-hard gamers; they play all day, and are able to provide players at home with the most up-to-date video-game play tips. (If you need a tip in a hurry, why don't you call them at [415] 591-PLAY.) In addition to being expert video gamers, Sega counselors are down with the newest trends in movies, music, fashion and style, often taking on the role of "pop culture" consultants.

## Your Hardware...



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From top company executives to game counselors, the video-game epidemic extends beyond the walls of Sega. Each of the 87 employees at our new advertising agency, Goodby Berlin & Silverstine, San Francisco, chose a different Sega game to master in its entirety—even before they were hired. Now that's dedication.

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---

*Al Nilsen, better known to some in the video-game industry as "Mr. Sega," is group marketing director for Sega of America Inc.*

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# PARAGON'S PROGRESS:

A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT THE NEW MICROPROSE GREENSBURG

DROP ANY PRECONCEPTIONS YOU might have had about Paragon Software, now MicroProse (MPS) Greensburg, the company that snagged (for awhile) the Marvel licenses for the *Punisher* and *X-Men* games. Board-gaming master Marc Miller would logically be one of the older manufacturers, complete with a multimillion-dollar development budget, as well as an older support staff of accountants and marketing experts who pride themselves on never having to come near the programmers.

*Wrong!*

MicroProse Greensburg breaks all of the rules: The employees are young, they like to work in the dark (which may be why 17 out of 19 staffers wear corrective lenses) and they don't drink coffee. The end result is that MPS Greensburg does have two games in development (one to be released in both CD and PC versions), and VG&CE visited its offices to give you a special inside look at the pair. Join us for a look at *Mantis: XF5700 Experimental Space Fighter* and *Challenge of the Five Realms: Spellbound in the World of Nhadardia*, as well as a preview of the next chapter in the *MegaTraveller* computer-game series.

## AT THE BEGINNING

Founded in 1985 by Mark Semeret, Paragon has since produced 15 games. Its first, *Master Ninja: Shadow Warrior of Death*, filled 256K of disk space. *Mantis*, by comparison, will fill over 500 megabytes of CD space. Al-

though the PC version of the game will be released first, *Mantis* was written with the CD gamer in mind. For all of its vaunted storage space, CD access is slower than even floppy drives, which creates long, awkward gaps in play for those programs simply copied to the CD. Therefore, it became necessary for the disk access to be timed well enough to avoid these gaps. This strategy makes it easy to chop out excess cinematics and still produce a PC version of the game for hard drive that's every bit as playable as the CD version.

The switch to CD format is not the only change Paragon/MPS Greensburg has made recently. In 1991, Paragon Studios opened a video production house complete with sound mixing equipment and sound libraries. Along with the setting, the studio was the site needed to film scenes that would later be digitized into *Mantis*.

The purchase of Paragon by MicroProse was an ideal arrangement for both partners, primarily because MicroProse was looking for an off-site development house. (Actually, the deal proved especially well-timed for Paragon because, during the weekend of VG&CE's visit, a violent storm flooded the studio, destroying composer Michael Bross' synthesizer as well as the studio's main monitor.) Maintenance of industry standards requires increasing cash reserves in between published projects, and many times small firms like Paragon need corporate backing. Games are taking "longer and longer to develop," ex-

plained producer and former co-owner F.J. Lennon. "Soon the industry will be composed of maybe five publicly owned companies."

Also, potential legal problems have prompted the renaming of the long-planned game *Spellbound* to *Challenge of the Five Realms*. Besides releasing the games by the end of the fiscal quarter, the staff hopes they can remember all of the correct names of their games.

## ZERO-G BUG HUNTING IN MANTIS

Anyone who's ever wanted to see a giant bug burst out of the local TV newscaster will love *Mantis*. The story revolves around Fist-Of-Earth's (F.O.E.) attempt to avenge the deaths of three billion inhabitants and protect the remaining citizens from the insects from Sirius.

The player assumes the role of Viper in this space-based flight simulator, as he works toward earning his Nebula Cross and maintains his relationship with Heidi Martin (played in the game by Mark Seremet's fiancée, Virginia Tomasko).

The genesis of *Mantis* is in the four-foot model of the space station Solbase, which Seremet and producer F.J. Lennon spent several months building before the final forms of any of the fighting ships were determined. Soon after, the *Mantis* team began filming the live-action sequences and then digitized selected video frames. By far the most impressive sequence is the opening, in which a Sirian erupts from the

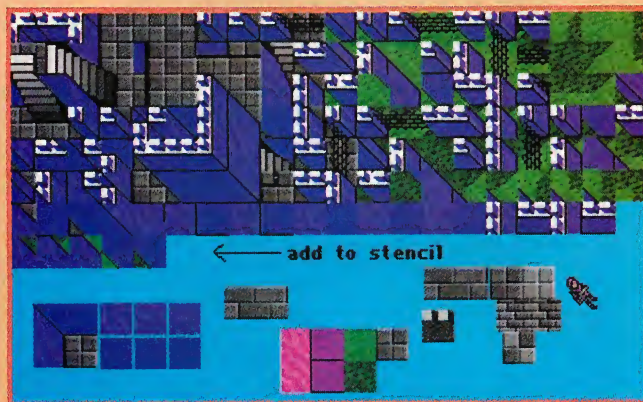
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body of the evening newscaster. Up until the first sign of blood, the digitized images are straight from videotape; but the actual "emergence" was done by artists. Unless you view the sequence frame by frame, it's almost impossible to tell the difference between the filmed and created footage.

Cinematic sequences aside, *Mantis* is a 3-D space combat simulator, and Glenn Dill is responsible for most of the actual play in *Mantis*. The programmer of the *Punisher* knows what he doesn't like in computer games and uses his deep experience with both machine language and C to prove it. For example, finding the end battle of *Eye of the Beholder II* too difficult, he broke into the saved game files and added a few thousand hit points to his characters.

Dill wanted space to be like a vacuum, not a flight simulator with stars instead of clouds. It's little nuances that Dill feels compelled to inject into the game. For instance, on the day VG&CE was there, Dill had a few extra minutes, so he wrapped all of the *Mantis*' known space into a globe just for the different perspective. Amateur astronomers take note: During a lull in his work, Dill tracked down star charts and programmed the actual night sky so bored pilots can go constellation hunting. The programmer's brother designs satellites, so he had a working list of equations to build the ships with. Total absence of air resistance in space means that ships move indefinitely in any given direction, accelerating according to the mass and thrust variables. Because of this overwhelming dependence on mass alone, it's often advantageous for a ship to enter combat with far less than full tanks of fuel, since the lower mass requires less thrust to achieve a desired speed. Without rudders and other flaps, as used on planet-bound aircraft, all directional commands are performed by applying thrust in a desired direction. Movement control will take as much time



TOP: A HUMAN CITY OF THE REALMS.  
MIDDLE: THE FOE OF F.O.E.  
BOTTOM: CASTLE IN PROGRESS.

to master as targeting, so players don't spend endless hours drifting in space. (As the lead programmer on *Mantis*, Dill claims to be the best pilot—as does everyone else on the project. More debatable is the potential of Dill's victory in the staff battle over the PC version's dialogue, which changes every time someone else gets a copy of the program's master files.)

The ships are equipped with nine different autopilot modes. The most interesting mode is "stop," where the *Mantis* ships match the speed and direction of a selected enemy vessel,

therefore making the Sirian ship appear motionless and much easier to target. The autopilot can also apply the proper thrusts needed to stop the *Mantis*. This is more useful than it sounds, considering the ship moves at three different speeds along three separate axes. The *Mantis* arsenal includes mass driver cannons, stinger missiles and X-ray laser mines, among others. *Mantis* also saves players' favorite weapons configurations, and, in later battles, *Viper's* squad gets to test new and unproven weapons in actual combat.

While graphic elements, such as explosions, are digitized for maximum effect, the ships themselves are made of polygons, allowing the game to be run on the older, slower, 286-based computers. Thanks to its massive storage capacity, the compact disc version of *Mantis* will have 25 more missions, full speech capabilities and more cinematic sequences. PC users not satisfied with the five megabytes of digitized video and speech sequences will have the option of purchasing a special speech pack.

MPS Greensburg realizes that digitized sequences like those in *Challenge* and *Mantis* are increasing hard-disk requirements far faster than drives are becoming more affordable. Both games have an option to delete the introductory cinematic sequences after the first viewing.

## CONDITION-BASED CHARACTERS IN CHALLENGE OF THE FIVE REALMS

*Challenge of the Five Realms* was the fantasy role-playing system Marc Miller had wanted to codesign for years. Frustrated by cold, numerical manipulation of his competitors, Miller envisioned a character generator where players would choose realms of magic to specialize in, and the spells within those realms. From those choices, the computer would then generate the appropriate statistics.

This was viewed as awkward, unrealistic and confusing. The alternative, however, was a list of questions where the answers geared statistics toward one or a combination of the four main classes: wizard, warrior, diplomat and thief. Other RPGs such as *Ultima IV* and *Prophecy of the Shadow* had experimented with the system, but Miller found them inadequate, each having only a few questions that were always the same. This began the great question hunt within the MPS Greensburg offices. By its completion, *Challenge* should have up to 200 questions, each with three to six separate answers. With only 12 used with each character, the game lends itself to repeated playings.

Once the statistics are determined, players design their character's face. Digitized images of actual photos may be used, or faces can be assembled through a face-paint system using over 300 features, including 50 noses, 20 pairs of ears and 50 mouths. The face-paint system is also efficient, taking only 75 bytes of disk space per character. Each of the 600 nonplayer characters (NPCs) in the game will thereby have a unique face, and, for the first time in computer role-playing, players will be able to track down NPCs based on their appearances.

Before programming began, Lennon took Miller's ideas and incorporated them into a 500-page tome that became the bible for *Challenge*. Implementing all of this would be hellish for any programmer, so the programmers and artists developed Lennon's World instead. Every object, location and NPC in *Challenge* is represented by a sprite, a 16 x 16 graphic arrangement of pixels. For each sprite, the specific designer has a list of options that determine the sprite's nature: Is it a trap, an object to be gathered or a person who will act accordingly to a variety of conditions? For example, a town mayor might request players to seek a magic crystal. If the players return with the crystal, the

mayor could give them an item, ask to join their party, disclose information or even be dead.

Creating the locations on Bill Petras' stunning map of Nhgardia requires no programming knowledge, so, as programmer Rick Hall describes, this means "more work for the designer and less for the programmer." It also means that members of the support staff get a chance to be designers as well, mapping their own cities (according to the 500-page guide) and even writing dialogue for their inhabitants, while the artists create as many sprites as they can. In fact, having eliminated the need for extensive programming, MPS Greensburg has utilized in-house talent alone for the first time with *Challenge*.



TOP: THE MANTIS XF5700.  
MIDDLE: A SELECTION OF SPRITES.  
BOTTOM: CHALLENGE'S FACE MAKER.

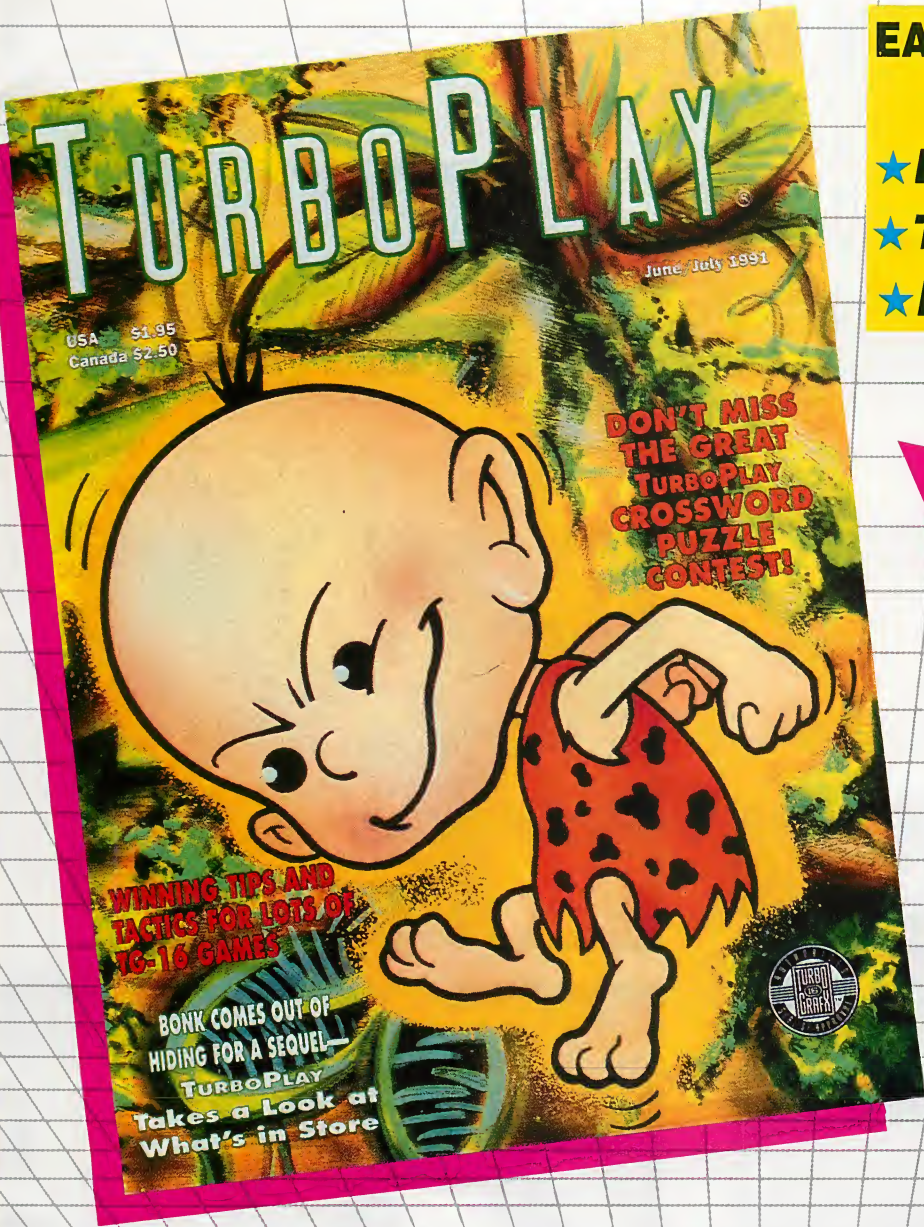
## MEGATRAVELLER 3: THE UNKNOWN WORLDS AND BEYOND

Marc Miller, cofounder of the publishing house Game Designers' Workshop (GDW) and the creator of *Traveller* and *MegaTraveller*, has a résumé so full of design credits that it reads more like a catalog. After the disappointing *MegaTraveller 1: The Zhodani Conspiracy*, Miller played a much greater role in designing *MegaTraveller 2: The Quest for the Ancients*. MT 2 debuted the PAL system, which will be used in *Challenge* as well as *MegaTraveller 3*. A form of on-line help, the PAL system allows players to interact with the nonplayer characters and ask for advice. The NPCs can do everything from warning a starship captain that they don't have enough fuel to reach a starbase after they make the space/time jump, to remembering the price of water on the individual planets. In some cases, different characters will give different opinions, and it will be the player's responsibility to weigh the arguments, assuming the PAL system is even en-

gaged. In other cases—namely the inevitable racial conflicts in a *Challenge* party—the system will be up whether the party wants it or not. Miller envisions the PAL system as a way for non-role-players to have a chance to enjoy RPGs and learn how they work.

Miller's design document for *MegaTraveller 3*, another several-hundred-page design guide, is complete down to the sketches of how he feels the screen should appear. *MegaTraveller 3* will feature three separate scenarios and will include worlds hinted at in GDW's *Traveller* products since the game's creation. Both the *Mantis* and *Challenge* teams will work on MT3 upon completion of their respective projects, but, as long as Marc Miller and MPS

Greensburg continue working together, players should start saving up for *MegaTraveller 4*. 🗺️



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# COMPUTER

## GAMES PREVIEWS FIRST LOOK

### Car and Driver

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Starting with the success of Microsoft's first flight simulator, most software companies left driving games to the stand-alone arcade machines, which could provide a steering wheel, pedals and a gearshift to players without adding a substantial price increase. Finally, after a glut of flight simulators, Electronic Arts has taken some of that technology and joined with *Car and Driver* magazine to produce *Car and Driver*.

Players select their car from a number of high-priced automobiles, including the Ferrari F40, Porsche 959 and Lotus Esprit Turbo. Then they select their favorite route, be it the scenic but treacherous California Route 1, EA's own raceway or the ultimate in insurance-free fantasy, the San Dimas Mall Parking Lot. U.S. Geological Survey data is used to complete the actual roadways.

The dashboards are faithful to the automobiles, and those looking out the windows will find the 256-color background is composed of the basic polygons common in most flight simulators, except that the detail may be added depending on the desired speed of play vs. the actual computer operating speed. In the maximum detail mode, trees actually appear to have leaves.

Those who find the only enjoyable part of auto racing to be the occasional destruction will have mixed feelings about *Car and Driver*. A car rolling on its side as it collides with a building might be fun to watch from 12 perspectives—unless you're an actual reader of *Car and Driver* who worships these machines. Rev the engine all you want, but the computer will rarely let the car redline, as it will automatically shift when the RPM get too high. Similarly, pressure on the accelerator is immediately decreased whenever a player shifts, so no convulsive jerks forward or trashing the transmission in a fourth to first maneuver here. It may be a simulator, but real or not, high-end automobiles deserve to be treated with respect.



### Liberty or Death

KOEI

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Lacking the grandeur of the Napoleonic wars and overshadowed by its political implications, the American Revolution has rarely been covered in either board or computer strategy games. Filling this void, Koei will be releasing its first game developed mostly by an American designer, Stieg Hedlund, *Liberty or Death*.



Up to two players can be the commander of either army as the game begins in 1775, when feelings about the revolution were still a colony-by-colony decision.

Those familiar with Koei's other games, such as *Gemfire*, will be familiar with *Liberty or Death's* two play modes: strategic and tactical. In the strategic mode, arms, men and supplies may be shuttled from one colony to another and either side may try to win the support of the colonists or the defection of an opposing officer. Bribery and good press help a cause, but it eventually comes down to the battlefield hex-grid.

# Spelljammer Dark Sun

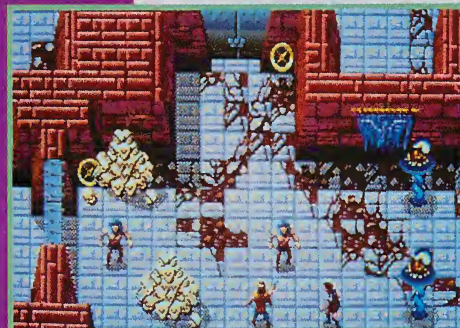
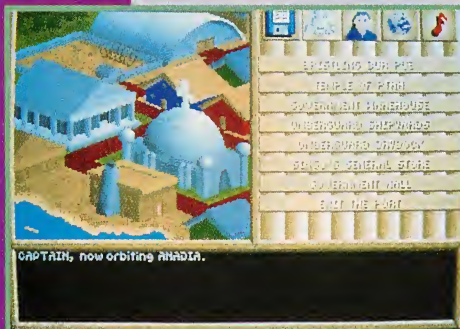
STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS

Version Previewed: IBM PC

After nine titles in three story lines, SSI has finally retired the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons gold box games, but its affiliation with AD&D is far from over. Just as TSR, the publisher of AD&D, has expanded from its original AD&D universes, which include the *Forgotten Realms* and *Krynn*, SSI has also adopted the new worlds *Spelljammer* and *Dark Sun* in upcoming releases of the same name.

*Spelljammer* catapults players into deep space on mystical galleons on a mission to destroy the flagship of the evil insectoid, Neogi. The game will feature real-time space combat and parallax graphics, which will show planets rotating in proper proportion to the ship's velocity.

In spite of the proliferation of undead, dragons and evil sorcerers, some at TSR did not find the current universes harsh enough for player-characters and created the desertlike *Dark Sun* world. Using a new engine that allows 256-color VGA graphics and animation at 25 frames/character, *Dark Sun's* first scenario, *Shattered Worlds*, opens with the player-character fighting as a gladiator in the sorcerer-king's arena. From there, players are expected to escape, create a rebel army and destroy the overlords of the wasteland planet. *Dark Sun* is the first AD&D game to feature psionics, and it will also be the first one supported by additional scenario disks, rather than stand-alone sequels. The first disk is scheduled for January 1993.



# El-Fish

MAXIS

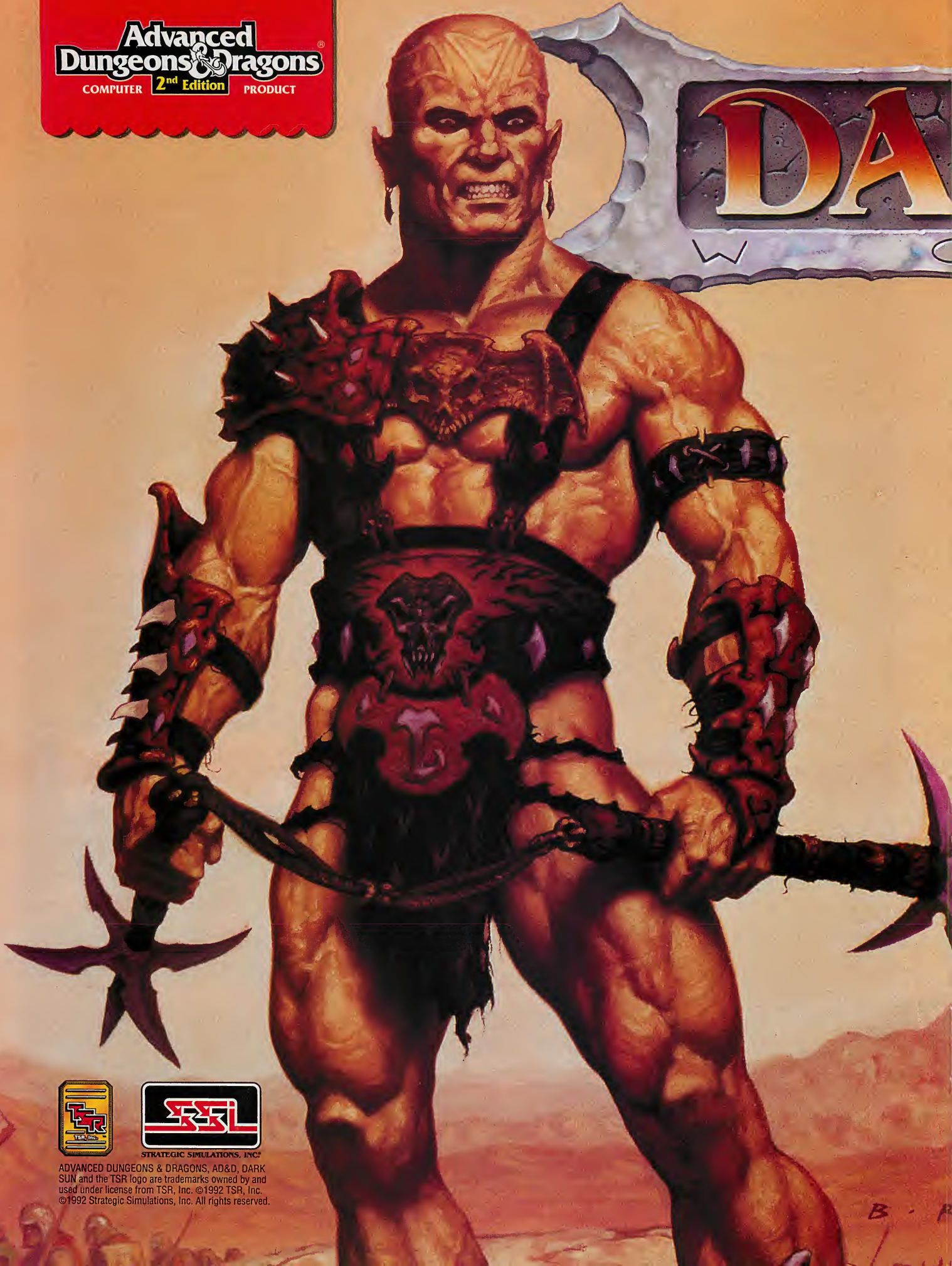
Version Previewed: IBM PC

Maxis has let players construct their own cities, planets and anthills, and now it is moving into the simple, confined space of a fishtank. *El-Fish* is the product of Animatek, a Moscow-based software developer led by Vladimir Pokhilko and Alexey Pajitnov, the creator of *Tetris*. Each fish has its own "genetic" code, which the computer reads and draws the 3-D images from. Players can then create new species by crossbreeding the fish. Then they test the species' survivability by putting them in tanks where they must contend with other fish for food, while avoiding becoming some other fish's dinner.



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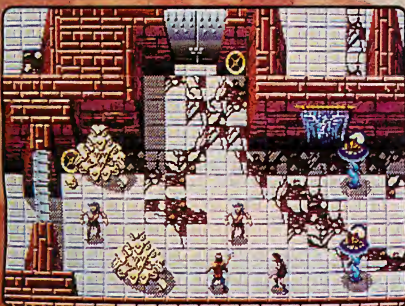
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Screens shown: 256-color IBM VGA.

# COMPUTER GAME REVIEWS

## Dune

VIRGIN GAMES

Version: IBM PC (\$49.99)

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|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

I always get a kick when a game based on a movie that was released a few years back is introduced. Traditionally, these games don't sell very well, or have not been the best-quality products, especially when they are based on a movie that didn't perform well at the box office.

Based on the novel by Frank Herbert and the motion picture by David Lynch, Virgin's *Dune* graphically translates the aforementioned into one of the year's most exciting computer games.

For those who are not familiar with either, here's the scoop. The year is 10,191, and the known universe is ruled by the feudal Padishah Emperor Shaddam IV.

Space travel is facilitated by using a spice called Melange, which extends life and expands consciousness—which, of course, is vital to space travel. Melange, which is *only* produced on the planet Arrakis (Dune), has become the most precious substance in the universe. The two most powerful families of the

empire (the House of Harkonnen and the House of Atreides) battle it out for control of Arrakis.

The game strays from the original story line of the novel and motion picture in that Harkonnens are still on Dune and in control of one third of the planet when the House of Atreides arrives to take over spice mining.

The player, as Paul Atreides, must gain the support of the native inhabitants of Arrakis (the Fremen) by visiting each sietch (desert caves where the Fremen live). As you



Jessica Atreides







travel from sietch to sietch you also convince Fremen to work for you, mining spice. Every so often the emperor drops you a line asking for a certain amount of spice to be shipped to him. Failure to comply with his request results in the emperor dispatching his fierce Saudaukar legions to Dune, killing Paul Atreides and the rest of the Atreides gang, thus ending the game. Dialogue with every character that you come across is necessary. Each person that you come across contributes in some way to the adventure.

*Dune* uses a simple point-and-click interface in its game play. Just click on a character to interact with him or her, or to select troops of Fremen. Unfortunately, when traveling from room to room you must always use the directional arrows instead of just clicking on a door or area directly.

Selecting "Maps" gives players a strategic overhead view of their immediate location and surrounding friendly troops, sietches, enemy troops, etc. Clicking on the globe brings up the entire planet, showing you your current location on the surface, which can also be moved around



to view any area of the planet. Selecting "See Results" shows you the globe of Dune with red and blue colored areas indicating how much (in percentage) of the planet you and the Harkonnens control. There are other indicators showing the levels of spice production, number of men controlled and Paul's "Charisma" level, which builds up as Paul visits the Fremen and gains their confidence.

This game is a tactical adventure, so don't expect to see fast-paced action. There's no hacking and slashing or

shooting and killing. *Dune's* game play relies on its strong strategic element and the gamer's diplomatic tact and ability.

*Dune's* greatest attribute is its astounding graphic presentation, compounded by its melodic audio track. From the interactive dialogue with each of the game's characters to the desert landscape views atop a sandworm, every visual is unique and powerful in its impact.

I must admit, I had a real tough time trying to find something wrong with this game. I was a little disappointed in how quickly I was able to finish it—about 16 hours of solid gaming. Then again, maybe it seemed too

short only because I was having too much fun trying to be "Muad'dib."

—Mike Davila

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#### EDITORS' CORNER

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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The same avowed kudos for its faithful rendition of the Herbert books and Lynch movie. Andy thought it was beautifully rendered.

# SimLife

MAXIS

Version: Macintosh (\$69.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

When does it end? *SimCity*, *SimEarth*, *SimAnt* and now *SimLife*! Good thing *A-Train* wasn't named *SimTrain*. Maxis' latest endeavor into the world of artificial simulations goes several steps beyond creating a large- or small-scale world, but actually splices into the very fabric of life—genetics. The object of *SimLife* is to create a well-balanced and integrated ecosystem. Sound easy? Guess again. After playing this game, one becomes appreciative of just how delicately Mother Nature has put this planet together.

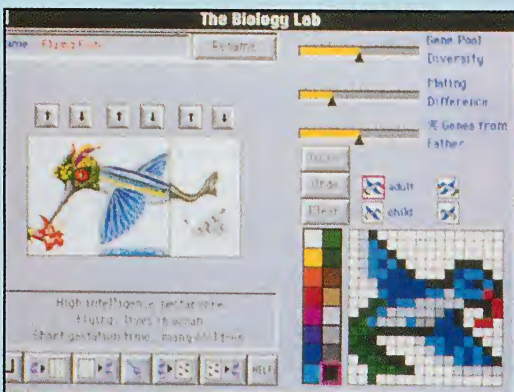
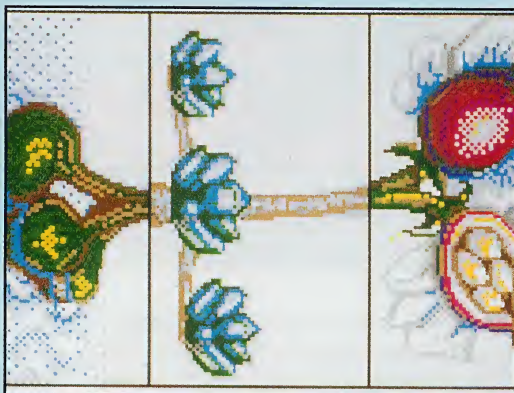
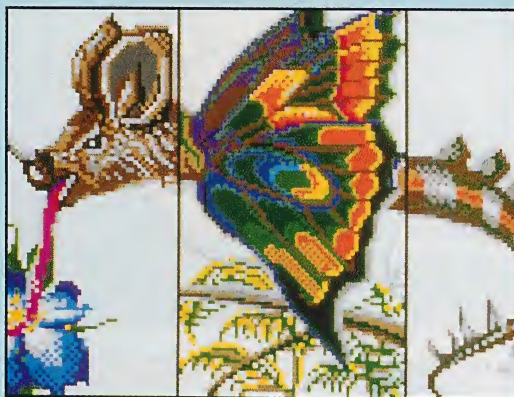
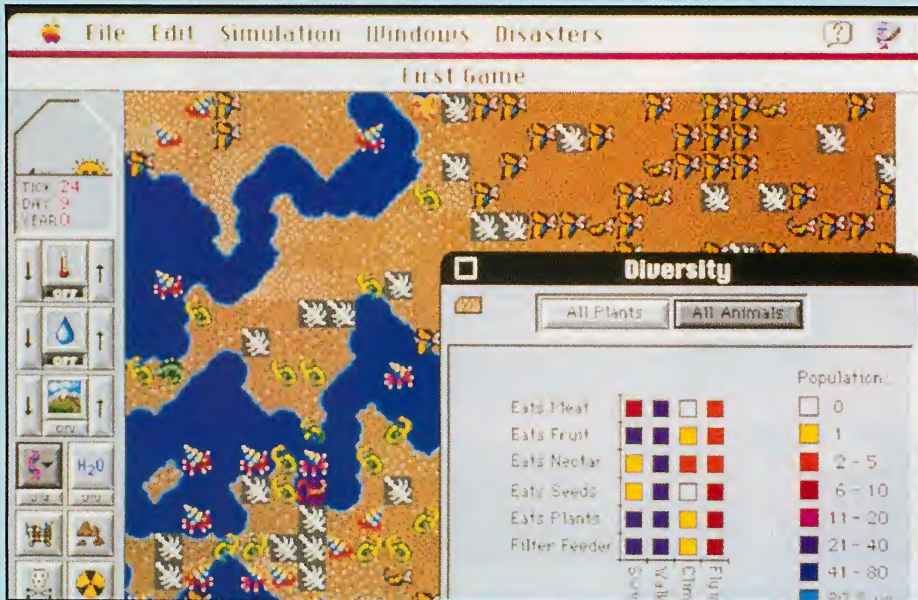
The game begins by letting you select from one of the nine predefined scenarios, or experimental mode, where you design and craft your own plants and animals. This brings us to probably the most exciting phase of the game.

Selecting the Biology Lab brings up a menu that lets gamers design and edit their custom life-form, all the way down to its genetic makeup. Gamers can create life-forms that have high or low intelligence, are water or land dwelling, are carnivores or herbivores, desert or tropical habitants, etc., etc. The selection of individual traits is pretty wide.

There is also a gene pool window that even shows the statistics on gene usage and what percentage of traits are being used by a species. As time passes, you will start to see shifts in the usage patterns of certain genes that are caused by either mutation or natural adaptation.

One other feature that can cause change in the ecosystem of the planet is the Disasters option in the menu. Selecting this allows for naturally and artificially induced (human abuse) disasters (e.g., floods, fires, plagues, STDs, etc.).

As in *SimEarth*, you have tools that let you control the



planet's climate and landscape. Unfortunately, these tools work much the same way as in that game, in that there is a lack of precise control. Instead of elevating the temperature or altitude of an area on the planet evenly, it unevenly raises the zone around the selected area so that you have wild deviations in the altitude, temperature or rainfall, depending on what was selected.

The game's documentation is clearly written. Don't worry! You don't need a degree in genetic engineering to figure it out. In fact, the manual has a touch of humor to it. At one point, it proudly (and accurately) proclaims: "This game has more buttons than all the bellies in China."

*SimLife* truly lives up to its *Sim* cousins' reputations, and, even if you are not a genetic engineer by trade, you should have a blast creating your own little custom world of carnivorous mutant life-forms.

—Mike Davila

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## EDITORS' CORNER

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Andy came to the conclusion that *SimLife* was a typically involving and educational Maxis simulation, but Dave expected more excitement in creating life.

# Rampart

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Version: IBM PC (\$39.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
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| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

There's not much to say about the computer version of *Rampart* except that it's a good translation of what was at best a mediocre arcade game. If you were a fan of the original Atari coin-op, you'll find everything intact in this release, but newcomers to this simple strategy game won't find anything particularly interesting or innovative.

The game play of *Rampart* is easy to learn and works the same for one to three players. Each person is given a territory with castles to defend, and the object is to enclose as much land and as many castles as possible while destroying the enemy's fortifications. The game is divided into three timed rounds and can be played in either a basic or enhanced mode. The basic game is a virtual duplicate of the coin-op, while the enhanced version adds a few bells and whistles.

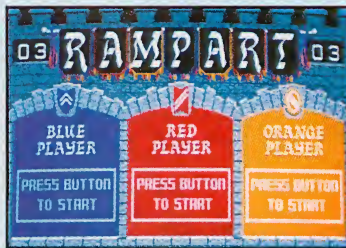
The first round of play is used for weapons emplacement, with players earning a certain amount of cannons for each castle they have successfully enclosed. At the start of the game, players choose a home castle that will automatically be enclosed for them, and they're given three cannons. Weapons can only be placed in enclosed territory, and, if you run out of room inside your walls, you'll have to forfeit the cannons for that round.

Once players have their weaponry in place, it's time for battle. Using either a keyboard, joystick or mouse (the latter two are preferable because the keyboard does not handle diagonal movement well), each person controls a cursor that serves to aim the cannons. Since the cannons lob their rounds rather than firing them, the further away a target is the longer it will take a cannonball to reach it. Frequently there are still cannonballs in the air after time runs out, so players can get in a last bit of damage even though the round is over.

As soon as the last explosion from battle fades, players have another short time to repair and extend their walls. In

this round, *Tetris*-like blocks appear that can be moved and rotated with the cursor, and the object is to repair castle walls and enclose new territory as quickly as possible. If players can't enclose at least one castle before time expires, they'll lose the game. Losers head screaming to the guillotine, where the survivor decides their fate, though a tasteful fade to red will cover any gory details.

The one-player version of *Rampart* differs slightly in that the enemy is an ever-increasing fleet of ships rather than castles or territory, and, win or lose, the six levels go by



quickly and with little variation. The only real strength of *Rampart* as a computer game is its enhanced mode, which allows players to select superguns and propaganda balloons as well as cannons. The balloons will let a player control a single enemy weapon for one round, while the superguns leave burning pits when they strike walls.

Also in the enhanced mode villages appear inside territories, and, if they can be encased, they'll turn into friendly grunts that will attack enemy fortifications. Walls cannot be placed

over unfriendly grunts or burning pits, and both weapons will cause your opponent no end of trouble.

The graphics of *Rampart* are adequate and faithful to the original, and a sound card will add good effects, though if you don't have one available it's best to play with the sound off. While the combination of guns firing, time running and grunts underfoot can make for a boisterous match, *Rampart* quickly pales in any mode because there just isn't a whole lot to it. As an example of a coin-op to computer translation, this game is first-rate, but, unless you were a fan of the arcade version, *Rampart* doesn't have much to offer.

—Craig Engler

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

To a man, everyone thought the computer version of *Rampart* was a good translation of the arcade title, but Dave was otherwise unimpressed.

# A D V E R T I S E R I N D E X

| <u>Advertiser</u>     | <u>Page #</u>           | <u>RSC #</u> | <u>Advertiser</u>     | <u>Page #</u>  | <u>RSC #</u>     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Absolute              | 4                       | 102          | Recreational Software | 53             | 120              |
| Acclaim               | 7, 11, 20-21,<br>27, 31 | 103          | Sega Corp.            | 28-29<br>42-43 | 111<br>117       |
| CamERICA              | 57, 59                  | 122, 123     | Sligo Video           | 121            | 133              |
| Champion Glove        | 92-93                   | 129          | Spectrum HoloByte     | 13             | 106              |
| Data East             | 23                      | 109          | Statregic Simulations | 100-101        | —                |
| Electronic Arts       | IFC-3                   | 150          | Sunsoft               | 39             | 114              |
| Electronic Games Etc. | 121                     | 136          | Synergistic Software  | 121            | 135              |
| Fun Co.               | 88-89                   | 127          | Telegames             | 121            | 137              |
| Fun 'n Games          | 121                     | 132          | Tengen                | 33             | 112              |
| Game Dude Club        | 40                      | 115          | Totally Turbo         | 69             | 124              |
| Games Galore          | 121                     | 134          | Tradewest             | 48-49          | 119              |
| GameTek               | 12                      | 105          | Triax                 | 8-9            | 104              |
| Interplay             | 79                      | 126          | Turbo Technologies    | 54-55          | 121              |
| Koei                  | 25                      | 110          | Ultimate Game Club    | 119            | 131              |
| MicroProse            | 17, 77                  | 108, 125     | Virgin Games Inc.     | 35, 47,<br>BC  | 113, 118,<br>152 |
| New World Computing   | 122                     | 138          | Warner Music          | 14-15          | 107              |
| Ocean America         | IBC                     | 151          | Working Designs       | 41             | 116              |
| Origin Systems        | 91                      | 128          |                       |                |                  |

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# Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis

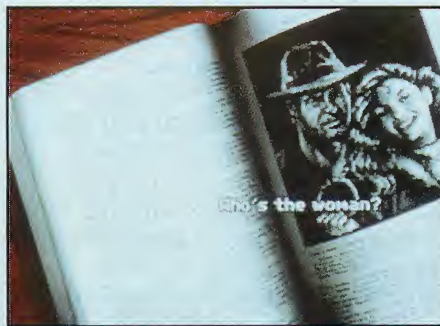
LUCASFILM GAMES

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

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The worst sin in interactive entertainment is to be boring. Whether it's the designers' credits, slow dialogue or interludes to advance the story, most designers seemingly concede that they can't be fully entertaining all of the time—but not at Lucasfilm. From one of the funniest opening sequences—with full credits—to the finish, Hal Barwood's *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* does everything it can to separate itself from other icon-driven graphic adventures. And it's replayable as well.

With the Holy Grail and the Arc of the Covenant polished off by the movies, it was time for Indy to go after something that couldn't be neatly hidden in the trunk of a Nazi transport truck—something like an entire continent. From the discovery of the miracle metal orichalcum to the abundance of secret chambers and unexplained artifacts, the unbeliever slowly develops the same zeal his enemies and friends have, not for winning the war but for finding Atlantis.

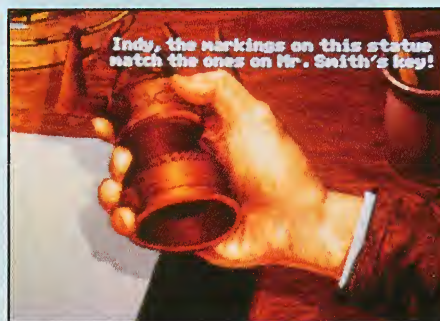


In the movies, Indiana always worked best when his partner could act as a foil, and the game's Sophia Hapgood is perfect for the role. Having a girl sidekick tag along may cause the more testosterone-laden adventurer to worry about how she'll affect the action, but, luckily, Sophia is no Kate Capshaw, who shrieked, whined and screamed her way through *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. An archeologist turned high-priced psychic, Sophia is a delight to have along. The fiery-maned adventurer can charm obstinate characters, supply humor and even out-think Indy on occasion.

The game is genuinely funny, though it is especially difficult to achieve the proper timing in having computer-generated characters tell jokes. Not as detailed as some of the backgrounds, the animated figures often wave their arms in exasperation, and their bulging eyes wonderfully complement the dialogue.

Humor is one way to keep an adventure from slowing down, the other is special effects. Periodically, Indy will disappear from the action, and players will get to watch what is happening with the other characters. Normally, these interludes are crude ways of advancing the plot. Here, they are full of some of the best explosions and special effects to be reproduced on a computer.

Replayable rarely describes such a story-driven game, but



after the first major achievement, the recovery of the *Lost Dialogue of Plato*, the game branches off into three separate paths: fists, wits and team. Corresponding to the predominance of action, puzzles and Sophia, respectively, each visits identical locations but in a different sequence with individual story lines. Saving the game immediately after discovering the *Lost Dialogue* is highly recommended, as all three paths are worth exploring.

The best of the *Indiana Jones* movies had workable, but mythical, story lines and a sidekick that was a foil, not a hindrance. *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* has both, and proves satisfying for far more than just amateur archaeologists and whip fanciers.

—David S. Moskowitz

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## EDITORS' CORNER

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Though Mike felt *Indy* was a little slow, both Chris and Andy appreciated the sense of humor that the game is inundated with.

# Guy Spy and the Crystals of Armageddon

READYSOFT

Versions: Amiga (\$49.95), Atari ST (\$49.95), Commodore 64 (\$34.95), IBM PC (\$49.95), Macintosh (\$49.95)

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| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Von Shadow, like most evil villains, has decided on world dominance. It's only a matter of time before he gathers the lost "Crystals of Armageddon," the fuel that is needed to initiate his doomsday device. Fortunately for mankind, the crystals are scattered around the globe, which will give Williams, our fearless spy, a chance to track down Von Shadow and his evil henchmen.

ReadySoft was the first company to succeed in bringing the popular coin-op laser-disc game *Dragon's Lair* to the home computer. Overall, ReadySoft has stuck with this format by releasing sequels, as well as another series of this type called *Space Ace*. What put these games in their own category was their cartoonlike animated graphics, a style that people were unaccustomed to seeing in a home-computer game. It was like taking control of a Saturday morning cartoon, well...almost. This technology had one shortcoming: You did not control your character; instead, you were thrown into this linear decision tree. Every scene required one joystick input, either a press of a button or a push of the stick in the right direction. If

your response was right, you would move on to the next scene; if you guessed wrong—instant death. Timing was critical, as frustrated players unfamiliar with the coin-op were disappointed to find that there was no actual control over your character. Constantly losing lives took on a whole new meaning.

*Guy Spy* takes this genre to the next level, giving you complete control of your cartoon hero, instead of a one-choice guessing game. Williams, our suave, somewhat clumsy secret agent, has to face many challenges in this globetrotting, danger-packed adventure. The story is segmented into a series of different arcade games, each one unique. After a short animated briefing, Williams finds out that Von Shadow is heading for Berlin. Cinematically displayed, you

watch as Williams buys his ticket, then proceeds down into the Berlin Metro. Now you take control, as Williams is suddenly ambushed by a gang of Von Shadow's accomplices. Directing the cross hairs left or right causes Williams to move in that direction; pressing the joystick button (or keyboard equivalent) will cause a stream of machine gun fire. On the opposite side of the platform, the henchmen are doing the same. It will be hard to look at your life meter when a barrage of enemy fire is "decorating" your side of the station. As soon as all of the goons are taken out, Williams boards the train and heads for the Swiss Alps. It's off on a deadly gondola ride to the top of a mountain, as, once again, you are confronted by Von Shadow's assassins, who are riding in another gondola ahead of you. The adventure continues as you wind up in a dodging dance of death with Olga (a gargantuan gal from the Alps), a trap-filled pyramid maze in Egypt, a barroom punch-out in Kenya, as well as many other perils. The final confrontation is with the big man himself, as you go one-on-one with Von Shadow.

Some of the sequences can be very difficult to complete, and replaying sections over and over again gives the game a repetitive feel. Luckily, as you reach a new area, you can save the game from that point. The urge to complete a scene is definitely present, as each segment feels like a major accomplishment. While not the most colorful game, *Guy Spy's* cartoon graphics are beautifully rendered, and sound support is in full swing with an abundance of hilarious samples. Did James Bond ever have it this tough?

—Joseph Cataudella

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Readysoft has created a game with nice graphics, but Mike didn't like the "laser disc-style game play on a computer." Dave felt it was too hard to control.

# Dagger of Amon Ra

SIERRA ON-LINE

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

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| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

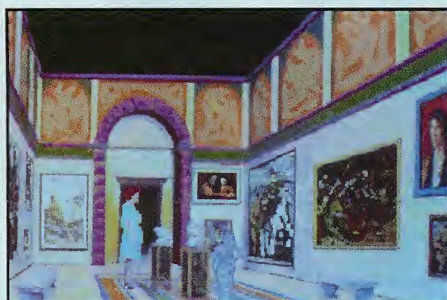
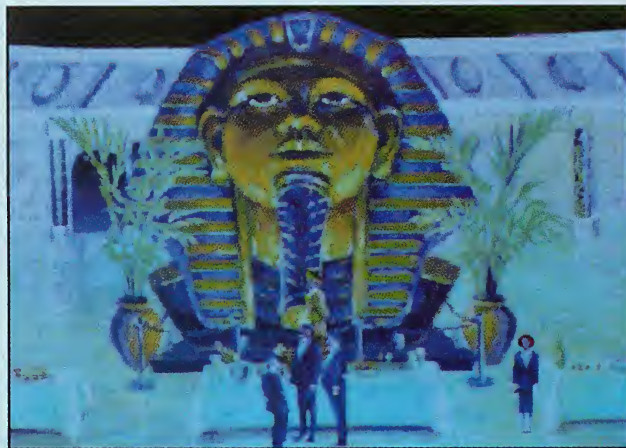
The *Dagger of Amon Ra*, the latest Laura Bow game from Sierra On-Line, is the follow-up to Roberta Williams' first mystery adventure, *The Colonel's Bequest*, and uses the *King's Quest* "mouse-only" user interface.

For *Dagger of Amon Ra*, Sierra has created a lavish 1920s game setting, using full 256-color VGA screens, digitized backgrounds depicting the artistic style of the 1920s and a full stereo soundtrack that will knock you out of your seat. (Play the game in a very dark room for the full murder mystery effect!)

After a long, but very important start-up sequence, Laura Bow appears, and we're ready for Act I. *Dagger of Amon Ra* is broken up into six separate "acts," each with its own clues. As with most Sierra adventure games,

*Dagger* is nonlinear; that is, it doesn't matter which order the puzzles are solved in, and some don't have to be solved at all to finish the game.

This time around, Laura finds herself in the middle of New York City, working for a big-city newspaper. A suspicious murder has occurred, and she's soon hot on the trail. Unfortunately, the employees at the newspaper and the local big-city police don't exactly welcome Laura's snooping with open arms, but friends can be found everywhere in this game.



Laura is equipped with a magnifying glass and a small notebook. As clues are gathered and puzzles solved, they are automatically entered into Laura's notebook.

Characters in the game can be asked questions by clicking on any of the people's names, locations or items appearing in Laura's notebook. Players should be sure to always examine objects with the magnifying glass as well as with Laura's eye icon, otherwise important clues can be missed.

How difficult is this game? It can be pretty tough in some places, and one wrong move can lead Laura to a premature death; but, with some thought, and by carefully paying attention to all the clues, the game runs smoothly, without any puzzles that seem com-

pletely unsolvable. For those who really have a tough time with *Dagger of Amon Ra*, a clue book is also available, and Scorpia has posted a detailed walk-through on the major on-line telecommunications networks.

Act I gets the player acquainted with the game (do be careful not to run in the street though—this is New York City after all). In Act II, Laura meets the major characters in the game. Act III involves a grand tour of the museum itself, and Laura finds some good clues as to what is really going on. Acts IV and V get tougher and far more dangerous for our heroine. There are tricks and traps all over the place, and Laura is getting much too close to the murderer for her own good—so close, in fact, that the killer will be chasing *her* in many scenes! Act VI is the finale, with all of the trappings of a good Agatha Christie story.

*Dagger of Amon Ra* is a great game for a rainy night, and it provides more than enough of a challenge to prevent it from becoming boring when the initial excitement over the sound and graphics wears off.

—Peter T. Szymonik

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

A typical Sierra adventure, featuring good humor, a great story and decent animation. Both Mike and Chris thought it caught the atmosphere of the era.

## Pacific Islands

EMPIRE

Versions: Amiga (\$49.95),  
IBM PC (\$49.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRAPHICS    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PLAYABILITY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

War games are notoriously hard to set up, graphically uninteresting and tiresome to play. *Pacific Islands* is an outstanding exception. It's the eagerly awaited follow-up to *Team Yankee*, which was developed by Empire in Britain and released in North America by ReadySoft about a year and a half ago. *Pacific Islands* uses the same basic play engine, but instead of being set in Europe against the then-USSR, it is set on a series of islands and fought against an unspecified adversary. (Though I must admit that the first time I saw the enemy's flag, I looked twice before I saw for sure that it wasn't the hammer and sickle.)

*Pacific Islands* improves on the play system, in which players are in charge of four tanks and the screen is divided into quadrants, each showing the view from one tank. The nifty part is that each view can be panned independent of the others. It takes a little getting used to in order to understand what you're seeing, but the learning curve is gentle and short. It's also possible to zoom the view of any one tank to fill the whole screen. The graphics are a combination of bitmap backgrounds and polygon objects. I have to give the developers a lot of credit for how well the graphic routines have been streamlined. Polygon graphics are usually slow enough that there aren't many objects on-screen at once, but these routines are fast enough that there are whole polygon villages to roll your tanks through with no slowdown.

What makes *Pacific Islands* such a standout game, and so much of an improvement on *Team Yankee*, is the strategy. The objectives involve not only hunting down the enemy forces, but also finding and laying waste to enemy installations. (You can even lay mines, though the first three times I

did, I blew my own tanks up; I finally learned to make note of where I put the mines.) The objectives aren't always simple ones either, but there can be more than one in a scenario along with secondary goals as well, such as cutting enemy communications. The



enemy is much more intelligent than it was in *Team Yankee* and doesn't always react to what you do in the same exact way.

*Pacific Islands* does have its flaws. There are two basic views: the 3-D out-the-turret and an overhead map view. I get irritated that the only way to control movement is on the map screen. I'd like to be able to actually drive my tanks, instead of pointing to



where I want them to go and then telling them how fast to get there. I realize that handling movement this way leaves the player free to concentrate on looking for the enemy and firing, but I'd like to have the option of steering. *Pacific Islands* has some good intro music, but the sound effects seem to consist solely of explosion noises. What is missing is engine noise. I didn't think I'd miss it, but engine noise would provide an audio clue about how fast you're moving without having to go back to the map screen to check the throttle.

Even if you aren't a war game fan—and I have to admit I'm not—*Pacific Islands* is a highly playable game, regardless of the genre. Oddly enough, after awhile I found myself in the same mind-set I get into when I play chess, spending more time planning moves than making the moves themselves. Spend some time with *Pacific Islands*; you'll be amply rewarded.

—Tom Malcom

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| DM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| WD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

There are strong elements of tactics and complexity. Dave feels it's the "thinking man's tank battle" and Chris appreciated the quick frame refresh.



# Spellcraft: Aspects of Valor

ASCIIWARE

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| SOUND/MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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What with the current popularity of role-playing games, the term "RPG" gets thrown around more than a football at a picnic. It seems that any game with a main character and a fantasy plot line manages to be mistaken for one of these complex adventures. For example, take a look at Asciiware's newest game, *Spellcraft: Aspects of Valor*. Although the publisher doesn't refer to the game as an RPG, a fantasy gamer might easily mistake it for one. The fact is, *Spellcraft* is about as much an RPG as *Terminator 2* is an historical romance.

Still, if your favorite role-playing characters tend to be wizards, *Spellcraft* may well enchant your gaming sensibilities. In this magical action quest, you'll do more spelling than Noah Webster, albeit of a very different kind. In fact, before you reach the end of the game, you'll have stirred almost five dozen ingredients into nearly a hundred types of spells.

You'll use those spells in the last of the three segments that make up each of the game's many quests. But before you get to the magical segment, you must first venture into the real world of Terra, which is represented by a full-screen world map. Terra contains many

cities, in which you'll find allies willing to share their knowledge and to buy and sell magical ingredients and equipment. Hopping onto a plane, you fly from city to city, meeting and dealing with your allies.

Once you've discovered your current quest (either from your allies or from Garwayen, your wizard mentor) and gathered supplies, it's off to your workshop, where you can experiment with magical ingredients and attempt to discover new spells. Each spell is composed of various ingredients—*aspects*, jewels, powders, candles and stones—in various quantities. You select the ingredients, mix them—then hope for the best. If a spell goes wrong, it can backfire with horrifying results. The graphics that accompany backfired spells are truly grotesque.

Finally, with new spells in hand,

you sally forth to Valoria, a magical realm that retains a tenuous connection to Terra. In Valoria you must obtain the objective of your quest, all the while battling the many creatures who want to stop you. Valoria, which comprises several realms, including earth, air, fire and water, is represented on your screen in an overhead perspective. As you roam around the map, creatures attack from all sides. And, although you have a sword, it is your spell book that'll keep you footloose and fancy-free. The action is furious (your enemies use



magic, too), so you must be skilled at quickly casting spells, as well as hacking apart monsters with your sword.

It is all the hacking and real-time spell casting that places *Spellcraft* smack in the middle of the action-game genre. However, you need to put your brain to work, too, if you're to discover the correct ingredients for new spells. For this reason, *Spellcraft* has something to offer fans of both the RPG and action schools of gaming. If you've always wondered what it would be like to have a long white beard and wear a pointed hat, *Spellcraft* just might hold the answer.

—Clayton Walnum

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The mixed reviews from the editorial staff said that *Spellcraft* is not too original (Mike), though very playable (Dave). Andy thought it was involving.

# Pit-Fighter

DOMARK

Versions: Amiga (\$34.95),  
IBM PC (\$34.95)

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| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Based on the popular coin-op, *Pit-Fighter* is a battle to the death against eight different opponents to become the World Champion. You can be one of three fighters: Ty, an agile kick boxer; Kato, a speedy, third-degree karate black belt; or Buzz, the powerful ex-pro wrestler. Each fighter has different specialty moves based on his fighting style. For example, Ty has a spin kick, Kato a combo punch and Buzz can perform a pile driver. The game's introduction animation gives you a feel for each of the challenger's unique fighting styles.

The illegal matches take place in various locations, such as parking garages, boiler rooms and motorcycle bars. In *Pitfighter* matches, you must defeat one of the seven ranked fighters who stand between you and the championship round against the Ultimate Warrior. Every third match is a grudge match against either the other human player in two-player mode or a computer-controlled challenger in one-player mode. Grudge matches are won by knocking down your opponent three times, as opposed to *Pitfighter* matches which are fought to the death. You have three lives within which to complete the game.

*Pit-Fighter's* digitized graphics have been ported to the PC with mixed results. The fighters are well done and scale smoothly when moving from front to back, yielding a good 3-D effect. The remaining graphics, however, are poorly rendered. The "weapons" you can pick up, such as knives and barrels, are crudely defined, and background graphics of cars and spectators are nothing more than black silhouettes.

The game's control mechanism ignores the PC's second fire button. To perform one of a fighter's eight moves, you must first center the joystick, press and hold fire button one, and then move the joystick in the direction assigned to the move you want to execute. This is fine for a specialty move, but seems overly compli-

cated just to throw a simple punch. Assigning one of the basic moves, either punch or kick, to the second fire button would have greatly increased the playability of this game.

To perform combination moves, you can't just rapidly press the fire button; you must continue to hold down the fire button while moving the joystick back to the center position and then again to the move position. Even the best joystick jockeys will soon tire of this and will switch to the keyboard, which I found slightly easier to use.

The manual does little to ease the player's frustrations. It lists three special moves for each fighter, but shows only one way to execute them. I tried several different combinations but was never able to use the other two moves. The manual also tells you to press fire-down to duck and fire-up to jump, when, in fact, fire-up causes your fighter to duck and then releasing the fire button will cause him to jump. There is no mention of how to throw a punch, one of the most basic moves in the game.

The game's sound is another disappointment. You can select either music or sound effects during play, not both. The game music is the same as the title theme and quickly grows monotonous. The only sound effects are the dull thud of your punches. With no grunts, groans or crowd noises, one wonders why the programmers even bothered with sound board support.

Good arcade-quality beat-'em-ups are sorely lacking on the PC, and *Pit-Fighter* does nothing to fill the void. Its lackluster graphics, minimal

sound and awkward game play capture little of the coin-op's excitement.

—Jeffrey Tschiltsh

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

All of the editors decided this was a waste of diskware. Andy saw it as nothing close to the original, and Chris asked why the characters are so tall and thin.

# Prophecy of the Shadow

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS

Versions: Amiga (\$59.95)

IBM PC (\$59.95)

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| OVERALL     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

*Prophecy of the Shadow* is a new release from SSI that might meet your expectations but certainly won't go much beyond them. The game is a genre-mixer of sorts, combining elements of role-play and adventure, and even requiring, upon occasion, the quick reflexes of arcade game play. Ultimately, however, despite all the polish of the game's window dressings, you get the feeling that *Prophecy of the Shadow* is a game you've played many times before.

Unlike the SSI "Gold Box" series of AD&D games, *Prophecy of the Shadow* is a "single character" adventure game, which means that you adopt the role of an apprentice magician in a fantasy kingdom (actually, a big island and a little island) where magicians are hunted and prosecuted by the powers that be.

You begin the game by building a character from three basic attributes—health, agility and magic—of which health is by far the most important for staying alive long enough to use the other two. But the character attributes and the character-building process are too crude for in-depth role play, and the game quickly slides into a predominantly adventure mode, with lots of overly bloody, hack-and-slash encounters.

Immediately after your character is created, a poisoned dirk whirls out of the forest to fatally wound your character's healer/mage master, who then explains the beginning of the game's quest with his dying words. From that

point forward you are treated to pretty much standard adventure-game fare. You have to find keys to unlock doors, fight (or work) for silver, buy supplies with your silver and talk to strangers to learn increasingly more about your quest. Continuously saving and restoring all critical decision points is crucial to successful game play.

One of the more interesting aspects of the game lies in the fuzzily digitized images (called "cinematics")

in the game's advertising) of non-player characters—peasant, inn-keeper, sheriff and such—who look a little like cloned refugees from a high school production of *Man of La Mancha*, but they do give the game a quirky sort of visual appeal.

As time goes by, the keys that unlock doors get a little harder to find, the fights get played out against bigger and badder villains and the quest gets a tad tiresome. It is repetition rather than variety of play that finally drives

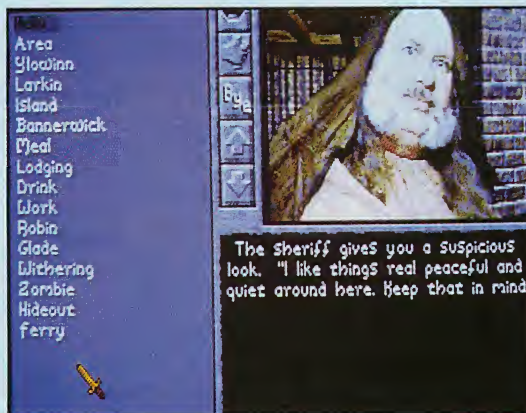
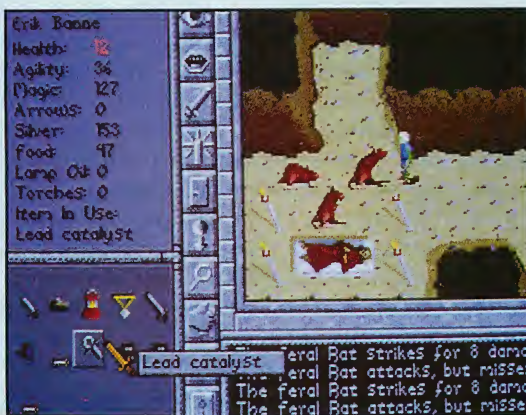
*Prophecy of the Shadow* to its climactic confrontation between your mage character (wielding the mystical Shadow Sword) and the evil Abraxus.

All actions in *Prophecy of the Shadow* can be accomplished by a point-and-click, icon-based interface that looks somewhat better than it actually works. But even with a fairly smooth interface, there is more tedium than fun in guiding your character back and forth through interchangeable forest mazes. And, upon encountering a thief or other baddy during your travels, you must decide quickly whether to fight or flee—the game has no pause feature.

Overall, whether or not you like *Prophecy of the Shadow* depends on how familiar you are with the genre and to what degree that familiarity breeds contempt. You might call *Prophecy of the Shadow* either a cinematically enhanced update of a classic adventure game or an outdated and somewhat outclassed (by the *Ultima* series, among others) role-playing game.

—David Myers

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| MD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The graphics don't seem state-of-the-art, but, as with most SSI RPG games, it should offer a good level of entertainment and durability.

# Take the A-Train to Financial Success

MAXIS

In *A-Train*, a player has to create a railroad and influence city development to earn \$50 million. In order to influence city development, a railroad must include freight and passenger lines. A successful player has to be aware of how to use money wisely, because, if there isn't enough cash in reserve to pay for taxes or other expenses, the game will end.

Thus, money is the most important aspect of this game. In *A-Train*, it is important to keep track of the railroad's assets (invested money), debt (including taxes), revenue and expenditures. Revenue and expenditures are the amount of money earned and spent on a day-to-day basis. Money owed to banks and the tax man is debt. Owned properties (e.g., railroad equipment, real estate and buildings) are assets. There are two different



types of assets: those that can be sold and those that can't be sold. At the beginning of the game, keep only the assets associated with your railroad (trains, track and stations). Then, in the early portion, create and sell assets such as apartment buildings, because a railroad needs cash for development. Later on, build other assets and lease them to encourage the area around a station to grow. An exception to the rule is buying some land and holding it for future development. The land should be near your

stations or where roads intersect or cross each other.

Once you have established your railroad, start buying assets with your profit. The tax on assets is 5%, compared to 50% for profit. Be careful—not all assets will make money. If an asset makes a profit, half of the profit goes to taxes (assuming that the total revenue is greater than the total expenses) and there is a 5% tax on the asset's market value. To see if an asset is making money, estimate its profit for the year and divide that number by two (or estimate its profit for half a year) then compare that number with 5% of the asset's market value. If the number is greater than the 5%, then that asset is profitable. Sell an asset built near a station in a developed part of the city to earn quick cash. Don't wait for income to come in, because the market value of the asset drops quickly.

Loans aren't always a great way to raise cash. Invested money usually takes some time to come back as a profit. In most cases, pay back a large loan gradually. When a loan is due, borrow enough money to pay back the loan and its interest. This new loan should be smaller than the first. Repeat this process until cash on hand pays for the loan.

Finally, never sell assets to cover a loan or tax payment unless there is no other way. Money earned from selling an asset is automatically added to revenue and taxed at 50%. Sell assets to buy other assets. Running a railroad is a tough business—making money at it is even tougher. Financial success depends not only on running a railroad efficiently, but also using its revenues to produce more revenues.

—John Schnyder



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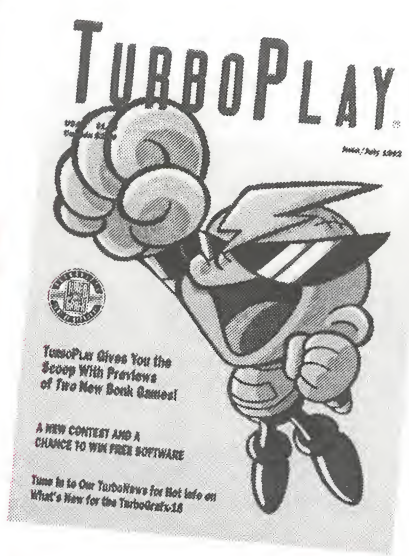
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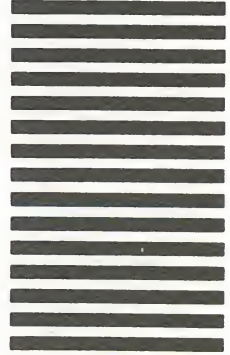
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## Conquering Global Conquest

MICROPROSE

*Global Conquest* is a much more complicated game than you might infer from its overly cutesy manual. In fact, many of the strategies and techniques needed to master the game are only glossed over in the manual—or not mentioned at all. This means that, if you expect to become a global ruler, you'd better put your shoulder to the grindstone and experiment with new techniques in order to discover what the manual hasn't told you. In this article, we'll try to do some of that work for you and get you started down the road toward global conquest.

Most of the hints here will deal with your various types of units. However,

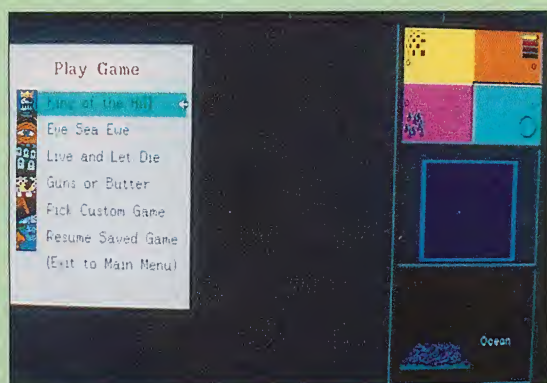
here's a quick tip that'll keep up the cash flow: Because the player who completes his turn the quickest gets an extra five bucks tucked away into his treasury, the first thing you should do when a turn begins is pause the game. To do this, click in the timer bar on the left side of the screen. Then, while the game is paused, plan your strategy for that turn. You can use most of the viewing controls while in pause, so take your time exploring the map and checking the status of your units. Unpause the game only to give an order, and then immediately repause the game. (You'll have to unpause the game when you're finally ready to give the execute command.)

Of course, before you can give good orders, you must understand the troops under your command. Each of the units in *Global Conquest*—com-

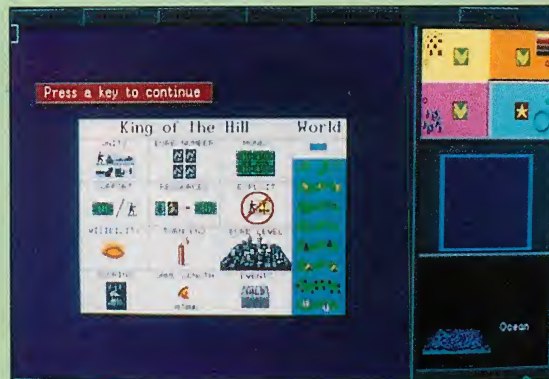
cens, planes, spies, infantry, armor, submarines, battleships and carriers—has its own strengths and weaknesses. An important part of mastering the game is learning when to use what unit. Here are some suggestions:

**Comcens:** Because the loss of a comcen (command center) means the loss of the game, you should use these units only for quick strikes, retreating to the relative safety of your Metroplex for repairs as quickly as possible. Although the comcen is the most powerful unit at your disposal, it cannot survive a battle against several full-strength enemy units.

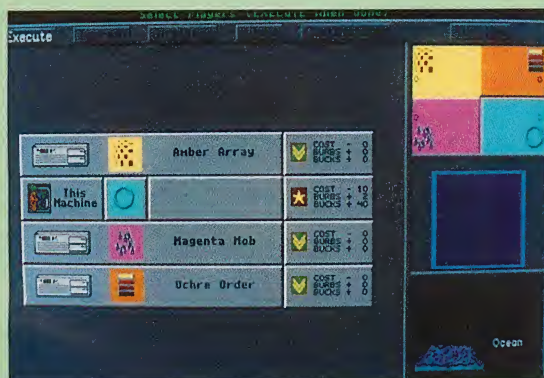
**Planes:** Of all the pieces, planes are the most useful. At the beginning of a game, you should use them to quickly explore new territory. While they cannot find minerals and oil fields, they can give you the lay of the



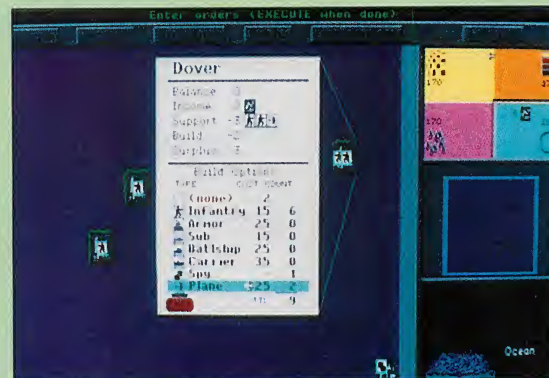
Each of the provided scenarios requires a very different strategy. For example, when playing the "Live and Let Die" scenario, you should attack the enemy at every opportunity. But when playing the "Guns or Butter" scenario, exploration is the key to victory, because, without vital resources, you'll be unable to build up your forces.



When learning the game, take advantage of the extras offered by the easiest, "General" setting. The additional cash and burbs you'll get will help you against the ruthless computer opponent.



You need a good balance of unit types if you're to survive the war, so plan your early production accordingly. However, when planning your production strategy, don't forget to account for the location of your burbs and the type of scenario you're playing. The strategic value of each type of unit changes with your overall plan.



Exploration is always the first order of business. Use your land troops to hunt for resources, as well as to discover new land masses.

land—including the location of enemy forces—faster than any other piece. The information you glean from a few air missions will help you solidify your strategy early on in the game.

Planes are also marvelous for weakening an enemy prior to a ground strike. Use them to continually bombard enemy units you want to defeat, until the units are weakened to about 15% or less. Then bring in your ground forces to mop up. In the same way, use planes to protect your own cities and units by weakening any enemy unit that tries to come too near. After a few air strikes, attacking enemy units will be too weak to succeed in their missions.

**Spies:** These guys are invaluable for keeping an eye on your enemies' ever-mounting forces. Keep your spies circulating the map, especially in the

area of your cities, to gather information on the location of enemy troops. Because spies cannot be seen except by another spy, they can get the goods much easier than most other units, except perhaps the planes. A spy's advantage over a plane is that a spy won't crash and burn!

**Infantry:** The infantry units are the core of your forces, the ones that you will rely upon to do the dirty work. Except in extraordinary circumstances, keep at least one infantry unit in each of your cities to make sure the cities aren't conquered by enemy forces or by a surprise native uprising. Patrolling infantry are good for locating valuable resources, which may increase your cities' income or allow you to build additional types of units. Last, but not definitely not least, use your infantry to kick the enemy's butts by destroying

moving or entrenched units or taking over cities and resources.

**Armor:** Use your armored units as you'd use your infantry. An armored unit's advantage is that it moves twice as fast as your foot soldiers, does more damage and has a slight defensive edge. Of course, it also costs a lot more!

**Submarines:** These are wonderful for secretly patrolling large ocean areas, gathering information on the whereabouts of seagoing enemies and defending your coast. If an enemy attempts to land an attack force on your shoreline, and you lack the air and land forces to stop it, a surprise sub attack will sink your enemy to a watery grave, or at least weaken it enough to make the attack ineffectual. Submarine attacks are especially devastating against infantry and armor transports, destroying them with one hit.



When exploring, your planes are invaluable for filling in the map as quickly as possible. Before you can mount your first attack, you of course need to know the location of the enemy forces.



Your spies, too, can provide you with much information about the map and your enemies' plans. Get your spy moving right away. But remember that only a spy can see a spy. Send your spy back to your comcen frequently, to check whether an enemy spy is stealing intelligence about your units and cities.



When you spot enemy planes, you can blast them from the sky (if you're lucky) by choosing your own planes' dogfight command.



When not mounting an attack, keep your battleships and submarines in a patrolling pattern. This ensures that the area's map stays updated without your having to reissue orders.



**Battleships:** These, too, are excellent for patrolling your waters and attacking enemy naval units. Although, unlike a submarine, a battleship can be seen by any enemy units in its area, it has the advantage of being able to bombard units onshore from a safe distance—another good way to weaken a target in preparation for a ground assault. Finally, a battleship can “see” more map area than can a submarine.

**Carriers:** Use aircraft carriers mainly for transporting planes to distant locations or for providing a moveable air base, from which you can mount air attacks wherever they’re needed. Carriers have similar abilities to battleships, but do slightly less damage in an attack and have better defense ratings.

While knowing how to use your units is imperative, understanding the game’s economic rules is also important. When you play your first couple of games, closely watch the way your money is used, how new units are created and how the cost of supporting those units affects your production. Remember: Units must have support from their home city if they are to stay strong. If you lose a city to an enemy, immediately check for units without support and transfer their support to a different city, if possible.

Even if you have enough cash to produce a new unit, your income must be high enough to support it. Until there’s enough support, the new unit will not be released. However, this rule can work in your favor. Even when they cannot support new units, towns

may still produce units and so have them ready for release when the support situation changes. (If a town has completed a unit, but is unable to release it, the time to completion will stay listed as one turn.) For example, if you have unsupported units ready to release in a town, when a unit attached to that town is destroyed, the replacement will be released immediately upon the next turn. Discovering new resources may also cause your cities to immediately release completed units waiting for support.

While it is too complex a game to be covered thoroughly in a short article, the information here should get you on your way toward victory. Good luck, and if you see one of my planes over your city, just wave—don’t shoot.

—Clayton Walnum



An enemy city surrounded by your planes is in a very vulnerable position. Use the planes to weaken the city’s defenses. Then move your ground forces in to take over.



Find all the resources you can. (The mineral resource in this photo is near the center of the map, surrounded by the white box cursor.) Depending on the scenario, resources can provide extra income for your cities or allow you to build new units.



Certain random events make *Global Conquest* interesting, but some events, like reversing the map’s orientation or making the game’s interface malfunction, are just plain infuriating. You might want to take the basic scenarios and customize them to leave out the wild cards—especially if you value your sanity.



To customize a scenario to exclude the wild cards, jot its original settings down on paper. Then go to the scenario builder screen and reenter the settings exactly as they were, except for the cards you want to turn off. Finally, save the scenario with a new name.

**W**elcome back to the all-new and improved Q & A column. You won't have to worry any longer about receiving a history lesson in games, or double-talk replies to your Q's. We have a ton of great Q's this month, so let's not waste any time and jump right into it.



I just hope your quest to answer questions can answer this question. I would like to know what is the best game to play for first-time NES owners. I have tried a few like *Rad Racer*, *Zelda II—The Adventure of Link*, *Hudson's Adventure Island*, *Defender of the Crown* and *Super Mario Bros.* I like *Zelda II*, *Hudson's Adventure Island* and some of the others, but I have come to believe you have to have been born in the age of the NES to be good enough to play any of the games.

—Melinda M. Fields  
Panama City, Florida



If by first-time gamers you mean novice video-game players, your list is pretty much complete—if you've really played all of those, you're not a novice anymore. We'd also like to recommend *Micro Machines*, *Super Mario Bros. 3*, *Tetris* and *Chip & Dale Rescue Rangers*. As for having to have been born in this day and age, most people in the video-game industry are in their 20s and 30s.

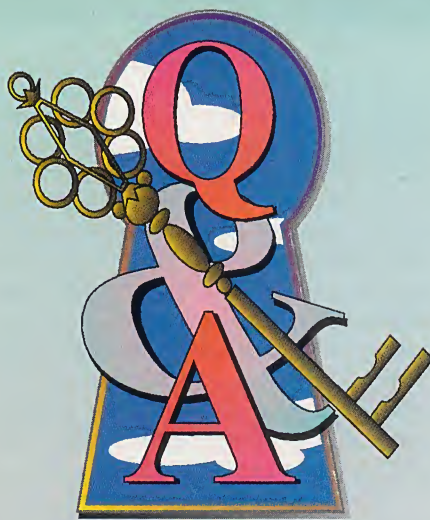


I own a lot of game systems, but the Amiga 500 is about the only machine I use to play games. It has excellent graphics and I also use it to type reports. There are new things coming out for it every day, such as the Video Toaster and CDTV, and the price for the computer itself is unbelievably low.

Now I have a few questions. Why is it so underrated? Why is it under-sold? In my lifetime I have only seen two commercials for it and that was about three years ago. I think if they tried hard enough they could make it the number one computer in the U.S.

Keep up the good work.

—Andrew Thomas Potocki  
Dyer, Indiana



Believe it or not, you answered your own question. The problem is not with the Amiga itself, but with Commodore's marketing. When Commodore first entered the home-computer field with the VIC 20 and the C-64, it marketed its computers more as game machines, which was something they excelled in. However, unlike the Apple II series and the TRS-80, few C-64s were being bought by small businesses or people needing to do word processing on a smaller scale. So, when Commodore introduced the Amiga, its marketers ignored its built-in graphics and sound advantages and tried to market it as a business machine. That meant going up against IBM PCs, IBM clones and, to a lesser extent, the Apple Macintosh. As you mentioned, IBM has exponentially more advertising commitment and money than Commodore, and there are dozens of manufacturers making IBM PC clones.

In spite of Commodore's paltry efforts, many software firms are determined not to let the Amiga become a gaming orphan. Some release Amiga versions of their IBM PC games very soon after the PC versions appear. If you're looking for Amiga games, try the following publishers: Psygnosis, Sierra On-Line, Electronic Arts, SSI, Domark and Accolade.



I am a big fan of the NES. When the Super NES came out, I was ready to buy one—in fact, the very next day after I saw the ad for it, I went down to the store with my dad, who

said he'd buy me one. Because my family wants me to learn the value of money, the deal I cut with my dad was that he would buy me the new system if I would buy the Super NES converter to play the old NES games that I have.

Well I didn't get the system that day. We went to Toys 'R' Us (which clearly carries almost the entire Nintendo software library) and I asked an employee about the converter. She said that Nintendo had pulled the plug (no pun intended) on creating a converter. Is another company going to develop a converter and have it licensed by Nintendo? Is Nintendo going to develop one? If the answer to either of these questions is yes, could you tell me about how much a converter will cost and when they will hit the stores? Thanks for helping a fellow gamer. I'd like to get this system as soon as possible!

—David Lee  
San Bernardino, California



At this time, Nintendo has no plans that we know of for creating a converter. If some third party builds one, you can expect to see a legal battle that will make the Galoob Game Genie litigation seem like a friendly game of *Pong*. Oddly enough, Nintendo is acting as if it will be releasing one soon by pricing the SNES almost as low as some of the NES configurations. If its display at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show is any indication, Nintendo has little interest in supporting the NES.

Video-game system prices across the board are much lower now than when you first went SNES shopping, and, frankly, we sympathize with anyone who wants to choose a machine by using a certain degree of financial responsibility. Our advice: Check out the software. Ask yourself if you want a lot of games of varying quality or a few superior ones. The SNES has wonderful graphics and sound, but the cartridge prices, on average, are higher than any other system, except the Neo-Geo. The 8-bit NES system may seem overpriced, but it has more than 400 software titles, and low-priced used games are becoming more available. The Genesis and TurboGrafx-16 have a mixture of benefits and drawbacks. Regardless, we'll still be covering all new software for all systems. If you don't normally read VG&CE, this might be a good time to start.

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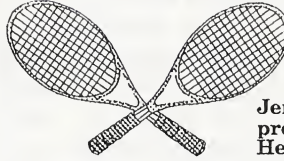
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I am an owner of a TurboGrafx-16 and I am very disappointed with the way they advertise. I have owned my system for about two years and can't understand why, with all of the great graphics and sound you get (not to mention all of the enjoyment), they don't advertise more. Oh, and by the way, have you looked at the pictures on the back of software packages lately? Yuck! That might possibly turn off some people interested in buying one! Do you have any answers?

Another thing, did you notice that some ads for Sega games contain photos identical to the ones in the reviews? Is this a coincidence or just another example of Sega's total lack of originality?

—Andrew Switter  
Cleveland, Tennessee



In Japan, the PC Engine (TG-16) is far more popular and secure with its market share than it is ever likely to be in the United States. Its determination to become as successful in the United States has been questionable, and the changes in management—even for the betterment of the game system itself—inevitably hamper efforts to conduct business in a nation that is an ocean, a language and a culture away. This is part of the reason it's had so much trouble choosing box art and selling its games to Americans. Anyone who's been disappointed by TTI's ads should check out the full-page ads currently running in many comic books, displaying its most important features: a sizable software library, a reasonable price and *Bonk*.

As for photos similar to those in the ads showing up in our reviews, we try to take our own screen shots of video games whenever possible; but there are times when we need additional photos from the game publisher because a game is too far from completion and we don't have a copy of it.

As for the Sega ads, you're calling the people who created *Herzog Zwei* and *ToeJam & Earl* unoriginal?! They're no more unoriginal than anyone else right now. Our top in-house video-game experts suggest that if you really want originality, you should try the old masters of innovation—Atari.



I have an early SNES (pre-Christmas) and I recently noticed something strange. When I played my *Super Adventure Island* cart on my system, at the beginning of the game, Higgins would scale and rotate and his head would end up in the lower right-hand corner of the screen. However, on my friend's newer SNES, Higgins' head would end up in the upper left-hand corner of the screen. I know that I haven't reprogrammed my cart, so the difference must be in the system. Is this how you can tell a Super Famicom-compatible SNES from the newer (supposedly incompatible) ones, or did Nintendo just change some of the firmware without telling their licensees?

—Ken D.  
via CompuServe



Considering there are a rumored 28 versions of the NES available, it wouldn't surprise us at all if multiple versions of the SNES already exist. As for determining compatibility, the only way to make sure your SNES is compatible is to try out Super Famicom software. We *do* know, however, that the most recent SNESes are *not* compatible with the Super Famicom. Any SNES owners trying to buy imported Super Famicom carts had better double-check, just in case they don't work.



I own a Sega Master System, plus four other systems and one portable. I've been looking through magazines for ads selling older Sega games, especially the classics. Looking at all of these ads gives me a headache; I can't decide which one I should buy games from. I wrote to Sega, and all they gave me was a list of the newer games. I read your article in VG&CE about mail-order companies, and it got me wondering which company I should trust. Do you know of any trustworthy mail-order houses that sell the classic Sega games?

—Clark Otto  
Saukville, Wisconsin



Close reading of the ads is the best way to decide which company to trust. If the ad doesn't specifically

mention SMS games, they probably don't carry the carts. Also, read the small print for the details of any guarantees. We don't have the time or resources to extensively research every company that places an ad, but we do read every piece of mail sent to us.

If we receive complaints about a specific advertiser, we'll investigate, and, if they are ripping off our readers, we'll pull the ad. Our advertisers are important to us, but they won't have a magazine to advertise in if they don't look out for our readers.



When I first subscribed, I didn't have any game system, but now I have an NES. I am currently looking at portable systems and have some questions about technical specifications of the TurboExpress and the Game Gear.

1. What is the color palette of the Game Gear?
2. How many colors can be displayed on the screen simultaneously?
3. Are both systems 16-bit?
4. Can carts used with the Genesis also be used with the Game Gear?
5. Can both be used as color TVs?

—Y. Tsentas  
Nicosia, Cyprus



As for your first two questions: The color palette of the Game Gear contains 4,096 colors, with 32 displayable on the screen at the same time and 16 colors per sprite. The TurboExpress has 512 colors, all of which may be used simultaneously on the screen, also with 16 colors per sprite.

3. The Game Gear is an 8-bit machine, while the TurboExpress contains an 8-bit CPU with a 16-bit graphics processor.

4. Unfortunately, Genesis carts will not work on the Game Gear. However, Sega sells an adapter that allows any Sega Master System cartridge to be played on the Game Gear. The TurboExpress will play any non-CD game that the TG-16 will, though it tends to obscure tiny details, such as small text.

5. Both the Game Gear and TurboExpress have adapters that allow them to be used as televisions. 📺

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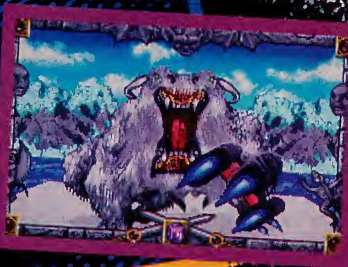
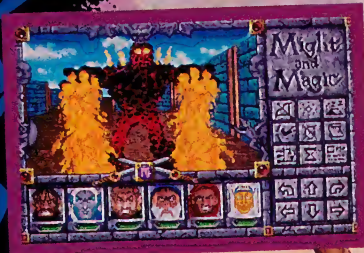


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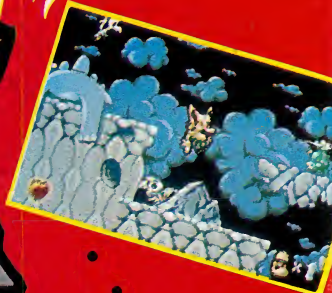
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